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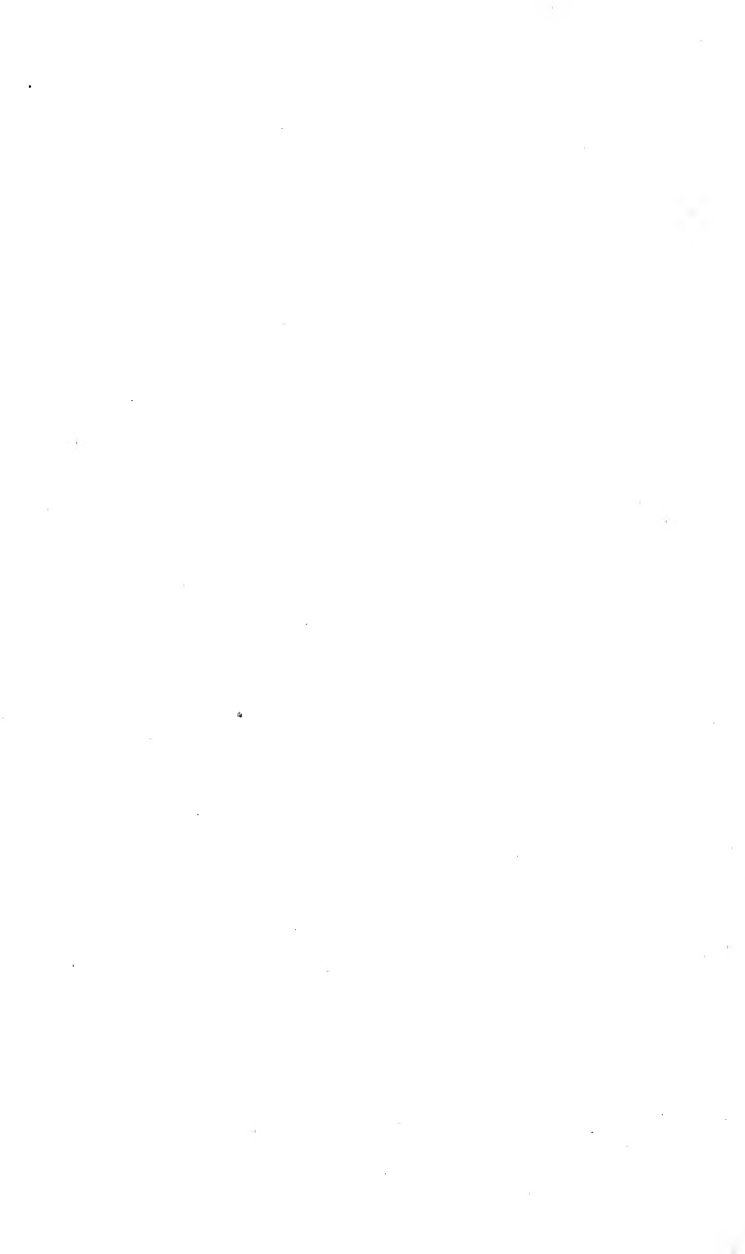
**Professor Henry van Dyke, D.D., LL.D.**

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The lesson commentary on the  
International Sunday-School

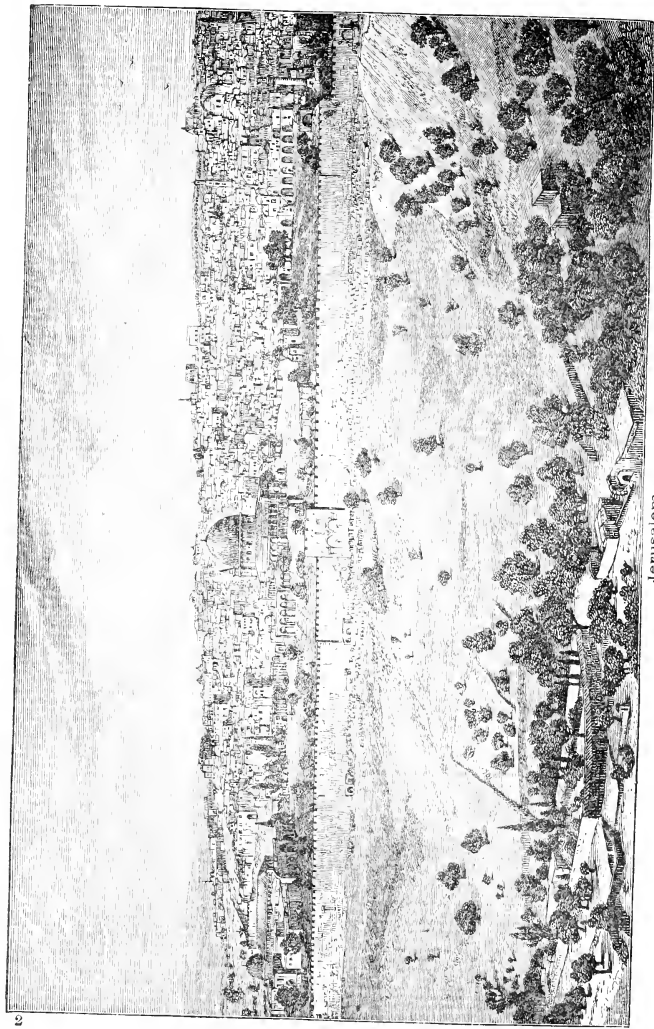












Jerusalem.



THE

LESSON COMMENTARY

ON THE

INTERNATIONAL SUNDAY-SCHOOL LESSONS

FOR 1884.

BY

REV. JOHN H. VINCENT, D.D.,

AND

REV. J. L. HURLBUT, D.D.



BOSTON:  
IRA BRADLEY & CO.,  
162 WASHINGTON STREET.



# P R E F A T O R Y.



**A** GAIN the table is set and the banquet spread. Good food from many fields is here furnished, and flowers from many gardens. Blessed are they who sit down with sharp appetite to partake and to gain strength, that being strong they may give help to others.

The LESSON COMMENTARY for the new year has been prepared with great care. Experience in compilation through the years has given judgment and discrimination. Familiarity with the ever-widening field of exegetical literature has increased the compiler's resources, and I firmly believe that the provisions made in this volume by our able fellow-worker, the REV. JESSE LYMAN HURLBUT, D.D., will more than ever aid and gratify the Superintendents and Teachers for whom this work is compiled.

A valuable contribution has been made to the current volume in the "Sermon Outlines" prepared by a number of distinguished ministers. They have been requested, in rendering this service, to provide sermon-sketches which would indicate to pastors a plan by which the teachings of the weekly lessons may be made to tell in pulpit discourses.

These compilations and sermon-outlines are man's contribution to the work of God in the edification of the Church. The human preparation is impotent without the Divine interposition. The fire

## PREFATORY.

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must descend from heaven upon the altar; the Divine reservoirs must be connected with conduit and fountain; the Divine Spirit must enter the body of flesh and blood. Therefore I beseech all students of these notes to invoke, in their perusal and in their application to the work of teaching, the blessing of the Father who has promised to give the Holy Spirit to those who ask.

J. H. VINCENT.

NEW YORK, *September 1*, 1883.

## LIST OF AUTHORS QUOTED.

Abbott, L.  
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Raphelius.  
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 Wilkinson.  
 Windischmann.  
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 Zockler.

# LESSONS AND GOLDEN TEXTS FOR 1884.

## STUDIES IN THE ACTS AND EPISTLES.

### First Quarter.

#### Lesson

- I. Jan. 6.—THE CONFERENCE AT JERUSALEM.** Acts 15. 1-11. *Commit vs.* 8-11. **GOLDEN TEXT:** We believe, that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, we shall be saved, even as they. Acts. 15. 11.
- II. Jan. 13.—HEARING AND DOING.** James 1. 16-27. *Commit vs.* 22-25. **GOLDEN TEXT:** Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only. James 1. 22.
- III. Jan. 20.—THE POWER OF THE TONGUE.** James 3. 1-18. *Commit vs.* 2-5. **GOLDEN TEXT:** By thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned. Matt. 12. 37.
- IV. Jan. 27.—LIVING AS IN GOD'S SIGHT.** James 4. 7-17. *Commit vs.* 13-15. **GOLDEN TEXT:** Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up. James 4. 10.
- V. Feb. 3.—PAUL'S SECOND MISSIONARY JOURNEY.** Acts 15. 35-41, and 16. 1-10. *Commit vs.* 9, 10. **GOLDEN TEXT:** Come over into Macedonia, and help us. Acts 16. 9.
- VI. Feb. 10.—THE CONVERSION OF LYDIA.** Acts 16. 11-24. *Commit vs.* 13-15. **GOLDEN TEXT:** Whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul. Acts 16. 11.
- VII. Feb. 17.—THE CONVERSION OF THE JAILER.** Acts 16. 25-40. *Commit vs.* 29-31. **GOLDEN TEXT:** Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house. Acts 16. 31.
- VIII. Feb. 24.—THESSALONIANS AND BEREANS.** Acts 17. 1-11. *Commit vs.* 2-4. **GOLDEN TEXT:** These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so. Acts 17. 11.
- IX. March 2.—PAUL AT ATHENS.** Acts 17. 22-31. *Commit vs.* 29-31. **GOLDEN TEXT:** In him we live, and move, and have our being. Acts 17. 28.
- X. March 9.—PAUL AT CORINTH.** Acts 18. 1-17. *Commit vs.* 9-11. **GOLDEN TEXT:** I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee, to hurt thee: for I have much people in this city. Acts 18. 10.

#### Lesson

- XI. March 16.—THE COMING OF THE LORD.** 1 Thess. 4. 13-18, and 5. 1-8. *Commit vs.* 11-17. **GOLDEN TEXT:** For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. 1 Thess. 4. 11.
- XII. March 23.—CHRISTIAN DILIGENCE.** 2 Thess. 3. 1-18. *Commit vs.* 1-5. **GOLDEN TEXT:** Be not weary in well doing. 2 Thess. 3. 13.
- XIII. March 30.—REVIEW; or, Missionary, Temperance, or other Lesson selected by the school.**

### Second Quarter.

- I. April 6.—PAUL'S THIRD MISSIONARY JOURNEY.** Acts 18. 23-28, and 19. 1-7. *Commit vs.* 21-26. **GOLDEN TEXT:** And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on the m. Acts 19. 6.
- II. April 13.—PAUL AT EPHESUS.** Acts 19. 8-22. *Commit vs.* 8-10. **GOLDEN TEXT:** And many that believed came, and confessed, and showed their deeds. Acts 19. 18.
- III. April 20.—PAUL'S PREACHING.** 1 Cor. 1. 17-31. *Commit vs.* 17-19. **GOLDEN TEXT:** We preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness. 1 Cor. 1. 23.
- IV. April 27.—ABSTINENCE FOR THE SAKE OF OTHERS.** 1 Cor. 8. 1-13. *Commit vs.* 10-13. **GOLDEN TEXT:** If meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth. 1 Cor. 8. 13.
- V. May 4.—CHRISTIAN LOVE.**—1 Cor. 13. 1-13. *Commit vs.* 11-13. **GOLDEN TEXT:** Love is the fulfilling of the law. Rom. 13. 10.
- VI. May 11.—VICTORY OVER DEATH.** 1 Cor. 15. 50-58. *Commit vs.* 55-58. **GOLDEN TEXT:** Death is swallowed up in victory. 1 Cor. 15. 54.
- VII. May 18.—THE UPROAR AT EPHESUS.** Acts 19. 23-41, and 20. 1, 2. *Commit vs.* 38-40. **GOLDEN TEXT:** Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? Psa. 2. 1.

## LESSONS FOR 1884.

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| <p>Lesson</p> <p>VIII. May 25.—LIBERAL GIVING. 2 Cor. 9. 1-15. <i>Commit vs.</i> 6-8. GOLDEN TEXT: God loveth a cheerful giver. 2 Cor. 9. 7.</p> <p>IX. June 1.—CHRISTIAN LIBERTY. Gal. 4. 1-16. <i>Commit vs.</i> 4-6. GOLDEN TEXT: Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free. Gal. 5. 1.</p> <p>X. June 8.—JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH. Rom. 3. 19-31. <i>Commit vs.</i> 24-26. GOLDEN TEXT: Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Rom. 5. 1.</p> | <p>Lesson</p> <p>XI. June 15.—THE BLESSEDNESS OF BELIEVERS. Rom. 8. 28-39. <i>Commit vs.</i> 37-39. GOLDEN TEXT: We know that all things work together for good to them that love God. Romans 8. 28.</p> <p>XII. June 22.—OBEDIENCE TO LAW. Rom. 13. 1-10. <i>Commit vs.</i> 7-10. GOLDEN TEXT: Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. Rom. 13. 1.</p> <p>XIII. June 29.—REVIEW; or, Missionary, Temperance, or other Lesson selected by the school.</p> |
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## THREE MONTHS WITH DAVID AND THE PSALMS.

### Third Quarter.

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| <p>Lesson</p> <p>I. July 6.—DAVID KING OVER ALL ISRAEL. 2 Sam. 5. 1-12. <i>Commit vs.</i> 10-12. GOLDEN TEXT: I have found David my servant; with my holy oil have I anointed him. Psa. 89. 20.</p> <p>II. July 13.—THE ARK IN THE HOUSE. 2 Sam. 6. 1-12. <i>Commit vs.</i> 11, 12. GOLDEN TEXT: He blesseth the habitation of the just. Proverbs 3. 33.</p> <p>III. July 20.—GOD'S COVENANT WITH DAVID. 2 Sam. 7. 1-16. <i>Commit vs.</i> 13-16. GOLDEN TEXT: Thy throne shall be established forever. 2 Sam. 7. 16.</p> <p>IV. July 27.—KINDNESS TO JONATHAN'S SON. 2 Sam. 9. 1-13. <i>Commit vs.</i> 6, 7. GOLDEN TEXT: Thine own friend, and thy father's friend, forsake not. Prov. 27. 10.</p> <p>V. Aug. 3.—DAVID'S REPENTANCE. Psa. 51. 1-19. <i>Commit vs.</i> 9-12. GOLDEN TEXT: My sin is ever before me. Psa. 51. 3.</p> <p>VI. Aug. 10.—ABSALOM'S REBELLION. 2 Sam. 15. 1-14. <i>Commit vs.</i> 4-6. GOLDEN TEXT: Honor thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee. Exod. 20. 12.</p> | <p>Lesson</p> <p>VII. Aug. 17.—ABSALOM'S DEATH. 2 Sam. 18. 24-33. <i>Commit vs.</i> 32, 33. GOLDEN TEXT: Whoso curseth father or mother, let him die the death. Mark 7. 10.</p> <p>VIII. Aug. 24.—THE PLAGUE STAYED. 2 Sam. 24. 15-25. <i>Commit vs.</i> 24, 25. GOLDEN TEXT: So the Lord was entreated for the land, and the plague was stayed from Israel. 2 Sam. 24. 25.</p> <p>IX. Aug. 31.—GOD'S WORKS AND WORD. Psa. 19. 1-14. <i>Commit vs.</i> 7-11. GOLDEN TEXT: Thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name. Psa. 138. 2.</p> <p>X. Sept. 7.—CONFIDENCE IN GOD. Psa. 27. 1-14. <i>Commit vs.</i> 4, 5. GOLDEN TEXT: The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? Psa. 27. 1.</p> <p>XI. Sept. 14.—WAITING FOR THE LORD. Psa. 40. 1-17. <i>Commit vs.</i> 1-4. GOLDEN TEXT: I delight to do thy will, O my God. Psa. 40. 8.</p> <p>XII. Sept. 21.—A SONG OF PRAISE. Psa. 103. 1-22. <i>Commit vs.</i> 1-5. GOLDEN TEXT: Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits. Psa. 103. 2.</p> <p>XIII. Sept. 28.—REVIEW; or, Missionary, Temperance, or other Lesson selected by the school.</p> |
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## LESSONS FOR 1884.

### THREE MONTHS WITH SOLOMON AND THE BOOKS OF WISDOM.

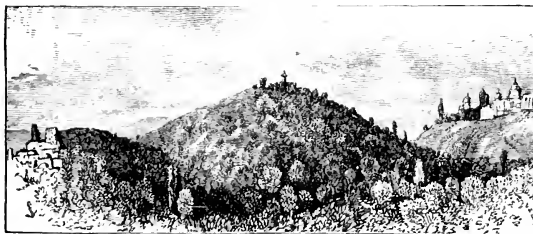
#### Fourth Quarter.

**Lesson**

- I. Oct. 5.—SOLOMON SUCCEEDING DAVID.** 1 Kings 1, 22-35. *Commit vs.* 28-30. **GOLDEN TEXT:** And thou, Solomon, my son, know thou the God of thy father, and serve him with a perfect heart, and with a willing mind. 1 Chron. 28, 9.
- II. Oct. 12.—DAVID'S CHARGE TO SOLOMON.** 1 Chron. 22, 6-19. *Commit vs.* 17-19. **GOLDEN TEXT:** Arise, therefore, and be doing, and the Lord be with thee. 1 Chron. 22, 16.
- III. Oct. 19.—SOLOMON'S CHOICE.** 1 Kings 3, 5-15. *Commit vs.* 9, 10. **GOLDEN TEXT:** Wisdom is the principal thing, therefore get wisdom. Prov. 4, 7.
- IV. Oct. 26.—THE TEMPLE BUILT.** 1 Kings 6, 1-11. *Commit vs.* 11-13. **GOLDEN TEXT:** Mine house shall be called an house of prayer. Isa. 56, 7.
- V. Nov. 2.—THE TEMPLE DEDICATED.** 1 Kings 8, 22-36. *Commit vs.* 22-24. **GOLDEN TEXT:** Behold, the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain thee. 1 Kings 8, 27.
- VI. Nov. 9.—THE WISDOM OF SOLOMON.** 1 Kings 10, 1-13. *Commit vs.* 8, 9. **GOLDEN TEXT:** Behold, a greater than Solomon is here. Matt. 12, 41.

**Lesson**

- VII. Nov. 16.—SOLOMON'S SIN.** 1 Kings 11, 1-13. *Commit vs.* 9, 10. **GOLDEN TEXT:** Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life. Prov. 4, 23.
- VIII. Nov. 23.—PROVERBS OF SOLOMON.** Prov. 1, 1-16. *Commit vs.* 8-10. **GOLDEN TEXT:** The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge. Prov. 1, 7.
- IX. Nov. 30.—TRUE WISDOM.** Prov. 8, 1-17. *Commit vs.* 10, 11. **GOLDEN TEXT:** I love them that love me; and those that seek me early shall find me. Prov. 8, 17.
- X. Dec. 7.—DRIVENESS.** Prov. 23, 29-35. *Commit vs.* 29-32. **GOLDEN TEXT:** Be not among wine-bibbers. Prov. 23, 30.
- XI. Dec. 14.—VANITY OF WORLDLY PLEASURE.** Eccles. 2, 1-13. *Commit vs.* 10, 11. **GOLDEN TEXT:** Wisdom excelleth folly, as far as light excelleth darkness. Eccles. 2, 13.
- XII. Dec. 21.—THE CREATOR REMEMBERED.** Eccles. 12, 1-11. *Commit vs.* 13, 14. **GOLDEN TEXT:** Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth. Eccles. 12, 1.
- XIII. Dec. 28.—REVIEW: OF MISSIONARY, TEMPERANCE, OR OTHER LESSON SELECTED BY THE SCHOOL.**



Bethany, Mount of Olives, and Jerusalem.



# MAP OF THE HOLY LAND

Corrected by  
F. S. DE HASS, D. D.  
1880.

Scale of Miles  
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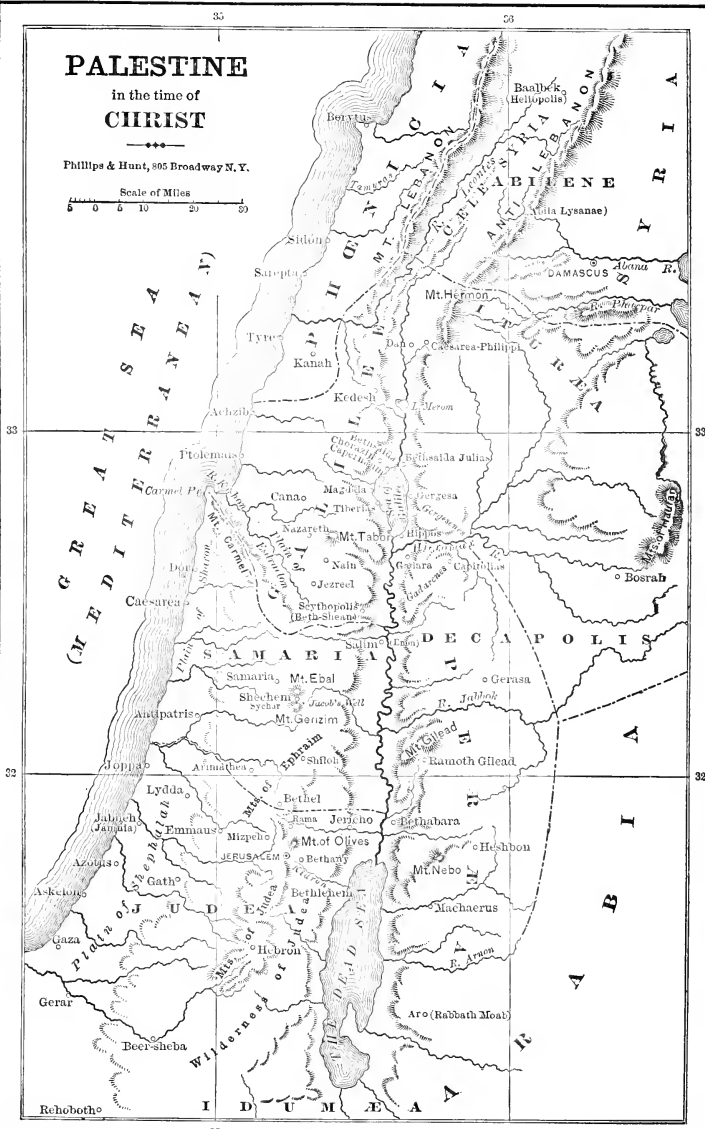
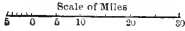


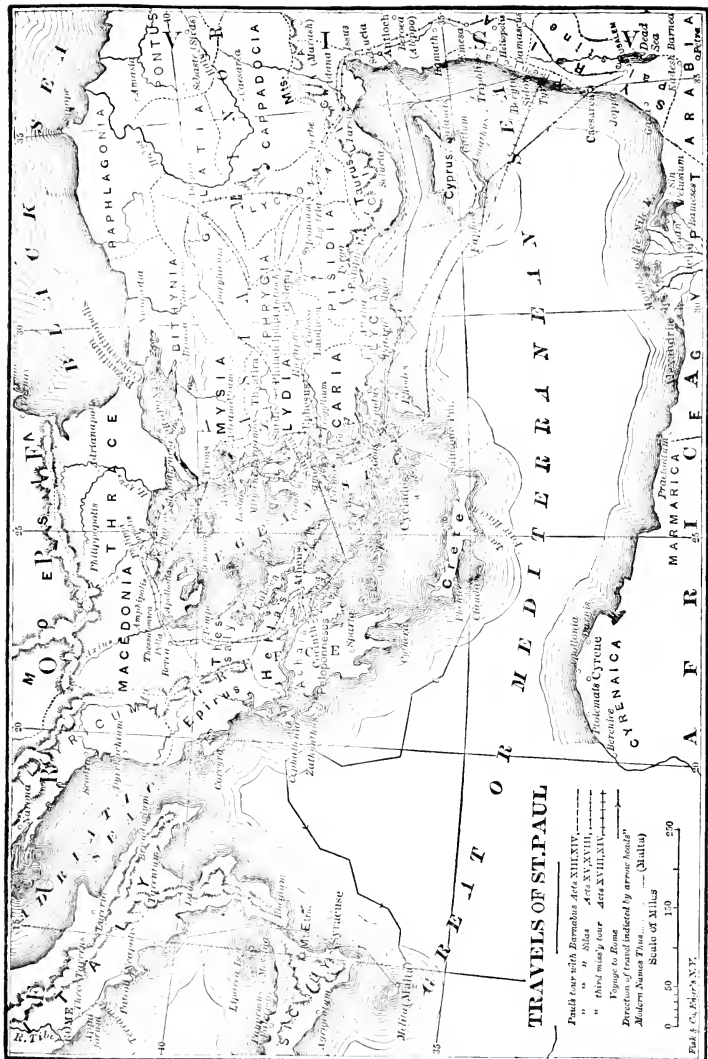
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    - 2. Carmel
    - 3. Juttah
    - 4. Dumah
    - 5. Tekoa
    - 6. Libnah
    - 7. Lachish
    - 8. Jittah
    - 9. Makkedah
    - 10. Adullam Cave
  - II. SIMEON.**
  - III. BENJAMIN.**
    - 1. Rimmon
    - 2. Gibeah
    - 3. Michmash
    - 4. Geba
    - 5. Anathoth
    - 6. Nob
    - 7. Gibeah
    - 8. Mizpah
  - IV. DAN.**
  - V. EPHRAIM.**
  - VI. MANASSEH.**
  - VII. ZEBULON.**
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  - XIII. REUBEN.**

# PALESTINE

in the time of  
**CHRIST**

Phillips & Hunt, 805 Broadway N. Y.





**TRAVELS OF ST. PAUL**

- First tour with Barnabas Acts XIII, XIV, -----
- " " Silas Acts XV, XVIII, -----
- " Third missionary tour Acts XVIII, XIX, -----
- Tour to Rome -----
- Direction of travel indicated by arrow heads
- Modern names thus ----- (Malta)

Scale of Miles  
 0 50 100 150 200

Engl. & Co., New York, N.Y.



# NAMES AND RESIDENCES OF PUPILS.

*Class No.*

*Teacher,*

*Residence,*

NAMES.

RESIDENCE.

REMARKS.

# AUTOGRAPHS.

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# INTRODUCTION TO THE LESSONS OF THE FIRST AND SECOND QUARTERS.

## I. Time.

The lessons of the first six months belong mainly to the life and letters of the Apostle Paul, and include the events from the Conference at Jerusalem, about A. D. 50, to the writing of the Epistle to the Romans, A. D. 57. These seven years formed one of the most important epochs in the history of Christianity, as at this time began the great division which made the Gospel no more the property of a Jewish sect, but a world-wide Church.

## II. Secular History.

At this period the Roman Empire ruled all the world from the Euphrates to the Straits of Gibraltar, and from the North Sea to the Great Desert of Africa. The Mediterranean Sea and all the lands around it were under the authority of one government, and in the main its rule was wise and beneficent. Though the emperors were sometimes wicked in their private lives, and their subordinate rulers were sometimes rapacious, yet the government of Rome as a whole was better than that of even the best of the kingdoms which it had supplanted. At the opening of the lessons, the reigning emperor was Claudius Caesar, a mild ruler, sometimes considered weak in intellect, though the modern judgment has placed him higher in ability than the ancient. In A. D. 54 he was murdered, and Nero, his step-son, ascended the throne of the world. At first Nero was a wise and just sovereign, and not until after the period of our lessons did he develop those traits which have made him memorable as the most cruel and abominable of all the Roman emperors. During the time of our lessons Plutarch, the biographer, and Seneca, the philosopher, were both living at Rome, and Epictetus, the greatest heathen moralist, was a young slave in the same city. The Jews were at this period governed by Quadratus, as legate of Syria, and Cumanus, succeeded in A. D. 53 by Claudius Felix, as procurator of Judea. The kingdom of Herod Agrippa I., the slayer of the Apostle James, was broken up at his death in A. D. 44, and his successor on the throne, Agrippa II., was permitted to retain only

the country north-east of the Sea of Galilee, while the rest of the kingdom, including Judea and Galilee, was annexed to the Roman Empire. At the opening of the lessons, Ananias, son of Nebedæus, was high priest of the Jews; but in A. D. 52 he was succeeded by Ishmael ben Phabi. The Jews were apparently loyal to the Roman Empire, but in reality dissatisfied and eager for independence, and already manifesting the turbulent spirit which, in less than twenty years after, arose in rebellion, and drew upon them the destruction of their city and the final extinction of the Jewish state.

## III. Events of the Period.

Our lessons open immediately after Paul's First Missionary Journey, in which, with Barnabas, he had traversed Cyprus, Pamphylia, Lycæonia, and Pisidia, preaching the Gospel. The two missionaries were at Antioch, when emissaries of the Judaizing faction in the Church came demanding the circumcision of the Gentile Christians, and obedience to the law of Moses, as interpreted by the scribes. This was refused by the broad-minded disciples of Antioch, and a dispute began between the two elements in the Church, which was not finally settled until the destruction of Jerusalem finally broke off the Gospel from all Jewish relationship. The council at Jerusalem (Lesson 1) gave liberty to the Gentiles, requiring only the observance of the moral law. Probably about this time was written the Epistle of James, containing Lessons II, III, IV.

The next event was the *Second Missionary Journey* of Paul, in which he was accompanied by Silas and Timothy. To this belong Lessons V-XII of the First Quarter. This tour extended the Gospel to Europe, in Macedonia and Greece, and led to Churches in Philippi, Thessalonica, Berea, and Corinth. To the disciples at the second of these places Paul wrote at this time the First and Second Epistles to the Thessalonians, the earliest of his letters now extant from which we have Lessons XI, XII.

After a brief visit at Ephesus, in Asia Minor, Paul went to Jerusalem, and thence to Antioch, from which he started upon his *Third Mission-*

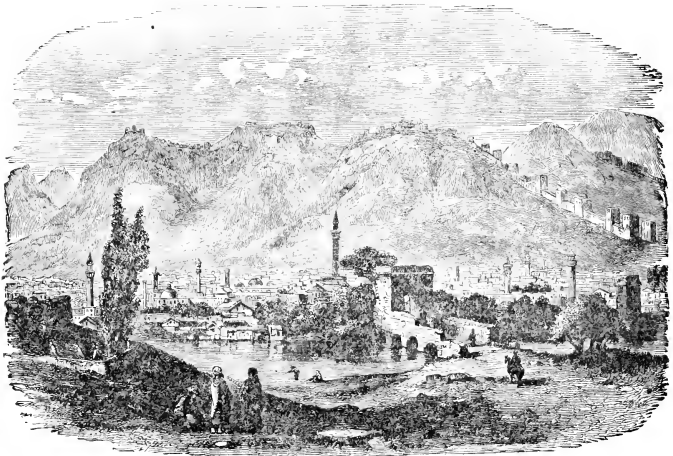
## INTRODUCTION TO FIRST AND SECOND QUARTERS.

ary Journey, to which belong all the lessons of the Second Quarter. Its principal stopping-places were (1) *Galatia*, not here named, but referred to in the epistle, and an important visit. (2) *Ephesus*, where Paul stayed for more than two years, and laid the foundation of a strong Church, (Lessons I, II.) While here he wrote the First Epistle to the Corinthians, (Lesson III, IV, V, VI,) and soon after leaving, (Lesson VII,) the Second Epistle to the Corinthians, (Lesson VIII.) (3) *Corinth*: here he wrote the Epistle to the Galatians, (Lesson IX,) and the greatest of all his writings, the grand statement of Christian doctrine, the Epistle to the Romans, (Lessons X, XI, XII.) Our lessons leave the apostle just as he is about starting upon his last journey to Jerusalem.

### IV. The Christianity of the Period.

There were certain traits which marked the Church of this important epoch: (1) We notice a rapid and wide spread of the Gospel, under the leadership of the Apostle Paul. From Antioch as a center the Church has reached the border of Asia Minor, crossed the Ægean Sea, won vic-

tories in Macedonia and Greece, and established itself, even in Rome itself, in the very household of the emperor. (2) The Church is becoming less and less Jewish and more and more Gentile in its type. At first Gentiles were admitted only on sufferance into the Churches, but already we see that the Gentile branch has become dominant, and, except in Palestine itself, the Jewish influence is scarcely felt. (3) We notice a more definite organization of the Church, Paul's apostleship is recognized, and he exercises a general supervision over the Churches established by himself, appointing officers, gathering everywhere a contribution for "the poor saints in Jerusalem," writing letters of apostolic authority, and bringing the entire work into unity. (4) More than in the earlier stage, we notice the development of a doctrinal system, hinted at in the earlier letters, but brought out completely in the great Epistle to the Romans, from which the Church has drawn its body of divinity during eighteen centuries. The doctrines preached by Paul at Ephesus, and written to the Church at Rome, are those which are still recognized as the fundamentals of Christian faith.



Antioch.

# THE LESSON COMMENTARY.

## FIRST QUARTER.

### STUDIES IN THE ACTS AND EPISTLES.

A. D. 50.]

LESSON I.

[Jan. 6.

THE CONFERENCE AT JERUSALEM.—Acts 15. 1-11.

**GOLDEN TEXT.**—We believe, that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, we shall be saved, even as they.—ACTS 15. 11.

**TIME.**—A. D. 50, while Claudius was emperor of Rome; Quadratus prefect or Roman governor of Syria; Cumanus procurator of Judea; Ananias, son of Nebedæus, high-priest of the Jews.

**PLACES.**—Antioch in Syria, and Jerusalem, the capital of Judea.

**INTRODUCTION.**—We have here an account of the famous controversy which arose within the primitive Church, and threatened its disruption into two branches—a Jewish-Christian Church, and a Gentile-Christian Church. Ever since the admission of the Gentiles, in the person of Cornelius, without circumcision, there was a strong Jewish party among believers, who held fast to their peculiar privileges as God's people, and wished to enforce circumcision and the other rites of Judaism upon the Gentile Christians. The defense of Peter (Acts 11, 1-18) only quieted for a time the complaints of these Judaizers; but on the report of the success of Paul and Barnabas among the Gentiles, and of the free Gospel which they preached, these complaints broke out afresh. The Church was now passing through a great crisis. The subject to be decided was, whether Christianity should be engrafted upon Judaism, or whether it should be freed from the restrictions of the Jewish law; whether, in fact, it should be confined to the narrowness of a Jewish sect, or be propagated as the religion of the world. Even the decision of the question by the apostles and elders at Jerusalem did not settle the dispute. The controversy reappeared in various forms, and greatly disturbed the peace of the primitive Church, until at length, in the second century, these Judaizing Christians finally separated from the great body of believers, and propagated their opinions under the names of Ebionites and Nazarites.—*Gloag.*

#### Authorized Version.

1 And certain men which came down from Ju-de'a taught the brethren, and

<sup>1</sup>Gal. 2. 12.

**1. Certain men**—Converts from among the Pharisees, still zealous for the Law, (21. 20,) unable to understand the spread of the Gospel among the Gentiles, with their prejudices exasperated by admission to the Church without circumcision. Their teaching had no sanction from the Church at Jerusalem, (v. 24,) and Paul characterized them as false brethren. Gal. 2. 4.—*W. Jacobson.* **Came down**—



From Jerusalem to Antioch in Syria, a journey of 250 miles. They came to Antioch, because that was the head-quarters of those who preached the Gospel to the Gentiles, and the chief seat of

#### Revised Version.

1 And certain men came down from Ju-de'a and taught the brethren, say-

Gentile Christianity. It is evident that they did not come accidentally, but with the design of inculcating their opinions.—*Gloag.* **Taught**—According to the Greek imperfect, *were continuously teaching.* **The brethren**—Gentile converts at Antioch, who understood the freeness of the Christian dispensation all the better after the successful results of the mission of Paul and Barnabas.—*W. Jacobson.* **Except ye be circumcised**—They regarded Christianity as something added to Judaism, and hence held that a man must become a Jew before it would be possible for him to become a Christian. **After the manner of Moses**—According to the custom of the Mosaic law. [Rev. Ver., *After the custom.*] **Ye cannot be saved**—The point of the teaching was not,

## Authorized Version.

said, <sup>2</sup>Except ye be circumcised <sup>3</sup>after the manner of Mo'ses, ye cannot be saved.

<sup>2</sup> When therefore Paul and Bar'nabas had no small dissension and disputation with them, they determined that <sup>4</sup> Paul and Bar'nabas, and certain other of them, should go up to Je-ru'sa-lem unto the apostles and elders about this question.

<sup>2</sup> John 7. 22; Gal. 5. 2; Phil. 3. 2; Col. 2. 8.—<sup>3</sup> Gen. 17. 10; Lev. 12. 3.—<sup>4</sup> Gal. 2. 1.

therefore, that it was expedient to be circumcised as a concession to the prejudices of others, but that *circumcision was essential to salvation*. It was this substitution of an external rite for the spiritual life of faith in a personal Saviour which rendered their teaching subversive of the soul.—*L. Abbott*. It is to be observed that such extreme views were then more plausible than they now appear to us. The Jewish religion was of divine origin; circumcision was the badge of the covenant; and hence it was not easy for Jews to admit that its observance was to be abolished, or at least to be regarded as unessential.—*Gloag*.

From the very first the Church's doctrine was assailed by her own people.—*Quesnel*.

The circumcision of the heart is necessary; but that of the body is now become dead and destructive in *Christ*.—*Hæftenus*.

It is common for proud imposers to enforce their own inventions, under pain of damnation; and to tell people, unless they believe just as they would have them believe, and do just as they would have them do, they cannot be saved.—*M. Henry*.

**2. Paul and Barnabas**—Who were then at Antioch, having returned from their first missionary journey. **Dissension and disputation.** [Rev. Ver., *dissension and questioning*.]—The former word, elsewhere rendered *insurrection, sedition, and uproar*, (Mark 15. 7; Luke 23. 19, 25; Acts 19. 40,) implies a vigorous and determined resistance to the Judaizers by Paul and Barnabas; the latter word, literally *questioning*, (as in Rev. Ver., 1 Tim. 1. 4; 6. 4,) implies debate; the doctrine and the authority of these Judaizers were probably both questioned. In fact, they had no authority to speak for the Church at Jerusalem.—*L. Abbott*. **They determined** [Rev. Ver., *The brethren appointed*.]—Luko, of course, tells the external side of the event; which was that Paul went by desire of the Church of Antioch; but Paul himself, omitting this as irrelevant to his purpose,

## Revised Version.

*ing*, Except ye be circumcised after the custom of Moses, ye cannot be

<sup>2</sup> saved. And when Paul and Bar'nabas had no small dissension and questioning with them, *the brethren* appointed that Paul and Bar'nabas, and certain other of them, should go up to Je-ru'sa-lem unto the apostles and <sup>3</sup> elders about this question. They

or regarding it as an expression of the will of heaven, tells his converts that he went up "by revelation." Gal. 2. 2.—*Farrar*. I cannot see it necessarily implied that the revelation was made *to himself*, but that there was *some intimation* of the Holy Ghost, similar, perhaps, to that in chap. 13. 2, in accordance with which the Church at Antioch sent him and Barnabas; there being *prophets* there, by whom the Spirit spoke his will.—*Alford*. **Certain other of them**—Titus was one, (Gal. 2. 1, 3,) and that, in all probability, in order to give an example of a Gentile convert of the uncircumcision endowed with gifts of the Holy Spirit.—*Alford*. **Should go up to Jerusalem**—Jerusalem was the mother Church of Christianity: it was the stated residence of the apostles, and, therefore, was regarded with veneration by the other Churches.—*Gloag*. The Church of Jerusalem might out of respect be consulted, but it had no claim to superiority, no abstract prerogative to bind its decisions on the free Church of God.—*Farrar*. **Apostles and elders**—The apostles were governors of the whole Church. The elders were not merely local, but representatives of that order in the Churches throughout Judea and elsewhere.—*W. Jacobson*. **About this question**—It may be imagined with what eager interest the Gentile proselytes would await the result of a controversy which was to decide whether it was enough that they should bring forth the fruits of the Spirit—love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance—or whether they must also stick up *mezuzôth* on their houses, and submit to a concision, and abstain from the free purchases of the market, and not touch perfectly harmless kinds of food, and petrify one day of every seven with a rigidity of small and conventionalized observances.—*Farrar*.

It is better to choose strife and retain the truth, than to choose peace and sacrifice the truth.—*Starke*.

Authorized Version.

3 And being brought on their way by the church, they passed through Phœ-nice and Sa-ma'ri-a, declaring the conversion of the Gentiles: and they caused great joy unto all the brethren.

4 And when they were come to Je-ru'sa-lem, they were received of the church, and of the apostles and elders, and they declared all things that God had done with them.

5 But there rose up certain of the sect of the Phar-i-sees which believed,

\* Rom. 15, 24; 1 Cor. 16, 6.—\* Chap. 14, 27.—\* Or, rose up, said they, certain.

Heresies occasion true doctrine to be more diligently discussed.—P. *Martyr*.

3. Being brought on their way—This seems to have been something of an official escorting of them on the way, and, perhaps, parting from them with solemn commendation to God.—*Alford*. The sympathy of the Church in Antioch was with them, not with the Judaizers. Acts 20. 38; 21. 5.—*W. Jacobson*. **Through Phœnicæ** [Rev. Ver., *Phœnicia*.]—The narrow strip of land between Mount Lebanon and the sea, north of Palestine, having Tyre and Sidon for its chief cities. **And Samaria**—They traveled along the coast, as far southward as Ptolemais, (Acts 21. 7,) and then crossed the plain of Esdraelon into Samaria, taking their course among converts not nurtured in Jewish prejudices.—*W. Jacobson*. They might have gone to Joppa, and so have avoided the old Canaanite cities and the region of the hated Samaritans. The very journey was, therefore, an assertion of the principles for which they were contending. The facts imply that they found *brethren*, i. e., established Christian societies, in both regions. "Tyre and Sidon" had repented and believed, though Chorazin and Bethsaida had hardened themselves in unbelief. Luke 11. 13. The "woman of Canaan," of Mark 7. 26, may, by this time, have eaten, not of the "crumbs," but of the "Bread" of life. Every thing points to Philip as the probable evangelist of this region, as well as of Samaria.—*E. H. Plumptre*. **Declaring the conversion of the Gentiles**—That they were not going to Jerusalem to learn from the Church there whether Gentiles could be converted without circumcision is very evident.—*L. Abbott*. **They caused great joy**—The tense implies continued action. Wherever they went the tidings of the conversion of the Gentiles were received by the disciples at large with a gladness which presented the strongest

Revised Version.

therefore, being brought on their way by the church, passed through both Phœ-ni'cia and Sa-ma'ri-a, declaring the conversion of the Gen'tiles: and they caused great joy unto all the 4 brethren. And when they were come to Je-ru'sa-lem, they were received of the church and the apostles and the elders, and they rehearsed all things 5 that God had done with them. But there rose up certain of the sect of the Phar-i-sees who believed, saying, It

possible contrast to the narrowness and bitterness of the Pharisee section of the Church of Jerusalem.—*Plumptre*. **Unto all the brethren**—The Judaic faction had small influence in these churches.—*L. Abbott*.

O how beautiful should the feet be of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things, even the joyful tidings of salvation, to the ears of a lost world.—*Burkitt*.

4. When they were come to Jerusalem—This was Paul's third visit since his conversion, and about seventeen years after it. See, for the earlier visits, Acts 9. 26; 11. 30. **They were received**—They were publicly and honorably received, as ambassadors of the congregation in Antioch, by the congregation in Jerusalem, as well as by the apostles and elders in a solemn assembly, after having, as it is obvious, previously informed some individuals of the object of their mission.—*Lechler*. The words imply a general gathering of the Church, members of different synagogues coming together, with the elders who presided over them.—*Plumptre*. **They declared**—This obviously implied a narrative of considerable length, the history of acts and sufferings, of signs and wonders, of the fruits of the Spirit as seen in the purity and truth and love of the Gentile converts.—*Plumptre*. During this interval before the general meeting Paul held his private interview with *James, Peter, and John*, (Gal. 2. 2-9,) which, together with the public discussions, resulted in settling Paul's equal apostleship.—*D. D. Whedon*. **God had done with them**—They made prominent in their recital the divine leadings and the converting grace of God among the Gentiles, thus showing that it was God's work, and not their own.

5. Pharisees which believed—The Pharisees were the strictest adherents to the law of Moses: they were the representatives of an

## Authorized Version.

saying, That it was needful to circumcise them, and to command *them* to keep the law of Mo'ses.

6 And the apostles and elders came together for to consider of this matter.

7 And when there had been much disputing, Pe'ter rose up, and said unto

extreme Judaism. Paul himself had belonged to this sect, but he had cast off their narrow-mindedness. Although these Pharisees were, like him, believers in Jesus as the Christ, yet they had not become liberal as he: they still retained their extreme Jewish notions; they held fast the indispensable obligation of the Mosaic law, and wished to make the Gentiles, through the medium of Christianity, Jews.—*Gloag.* It was needful to circumcise—The assertion of the Christians who entertained Pharisaic views, although essentially the same as those made by the Judaizers in Antioch, nevertheless differ in the following particulars: (1) Those in Jerusalem demand the circumcision of the Gentiles as a duty which must be authoritatively prescribed to them, a duty which they must be compelled to perform. Those in Antioch had simply taught that the Gentile-Christians ought to submit voluntarily to circumcision. (2) In Antioch the claims of the Mosaic law were advocated only in so far as it sanctioned their demand respecting circumcision, and required the observance of that rite as a custom and usage; but here in Jerusalem far more was expected; the demand was distinctly made that the observance of the Mosaic law in general should be imposed on Gentile Christians as a duty.—*Lechler.*

How difficult it is to cast away the Pharisaical leaven, and to cling solely to the grace of God! But faith does not at once deliver us from errors and infirmities; long-continued exercise and many struggles precede our deliverance.—*Starke.*

God hath written a Law and a Gospel: the Law to humble us, and the Gospel to comfort us; the Law to cast us down, and the Gospel to raise us up; the Law to convince us of our misery, and the Gospel to convince us of his mercy; the Law to discover sin, and the Gospel to discover grace and Christ.—*J. Mason.*

6. The apostles and elders—This was not a representative council of the Churches of Christendom, nor even of Palestine, but only the officers and laity of the Church at Jerusalem, together with the apostles; the latter, as

## Revised Version.

is needful to circumcise them, and to charge them to keep the law of Mo'ses.

6 And the apostles and the elders were gathered together to consider of this

7 matter. And when there had been much questioning, Pe'ter rose up, and said unto them,

the immediate life companions of our Lord, would have had great influence irrespective of any ecclesiastical authority which they may have possessed.—*L. Abbott.* The whole body of the Church were present at the deliberation, (v. 12,) and concurred in the decision.—*W. Jacobson.* To consider—The divine inspiration, by which the apostles were guided when they spoke and wrote, did not render their common consultations and their meditations on the divine word superfluous.—*Starke.* This matter—There were two great questions: (1) Must the Gentiles be circumcised? Answered in the negative, (v. 19.) (2) Were they bound to observe the Ceremonial Law? They were not to give offense, and to avoid sins of the flesh, (v. 20, 28, 29.)—*W. Jacobson.* Humanly speaking, the future of the Church depended on the decision of this question. If the Pharisaic party had triumphed, the Christian Church would have been buried in the grave of Judaism.—*L. Abbott.*

7. Much disputing [Rev. Ver., *questioning.*]—It was not an angry dispute, but a long discussion, during which the arguments on both sides were carefully weighed. This procedure was honorable to the apostles, and bears witness alike to their gentleness, since they listened to the opinions of inferior brethren; and also to their diligence and care, since they considered divine truth not superficially, but maturely.—*Brandt.* There were, doubtless, four varieties of opinion in the Church on this subject. (1) The Pauline view, that obedience to the Mosaic law was not essential, yet it might be observed by those Jews who preferred it, provided they did not claim it as a necessary part of Christianity. (2) The view of James, who kept the law himself, and probably counseled other Jews to keep it, yet did not insist upon its obedience by Gentiles who believed. (3) The ultra-Jewish view, that circumcision and the Mosaic regulations were essential to salvation. (4) The ultra-Gentile view, not likely presented at this conference discarding circumcision and the law as things entirely passed away. Peter rose up—The position of the apostle is one of authority, but not of primacy. He does not preside, nor even pro-

Authorized Version.

them, Men *and* brethren, ye know how that a good while ago God made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the Gospel, and believe.

8 And God, <sup>7</sup>which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, <sup>8</sup>giving them the Holy Ghost, even as *he did* unto us;

9 And <sup>9</sup>put no difference between us and them, <sup>10</sup>purifying their hearts by faith.

10 Now therefore why tempt ye God, to <sup>11</sup>put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?

<sup>7</sup>1 Chron. 28, 9; 29, 17; Jer. 31, 20; 17, 10; 20, 10; chap. 1, 24; Heb. 4, 13; Rev. 2, 27.—<sup>8</sup>Chap. 10, 41.—<sup>9</sup>Rev. 10, 11, 19 Chap. 10, 45; 1 Cor. 1, 27; 1 Pet. 1, 22.—<sup>10</sup>Matt. 23, 4; Gal. 5, 1.

pose, as we should say, a definite canon or resolution. His authority is that of a personal and moral influence, but nothing more.—*E. H. Plumptre*. On this occasion we hear him speak for the last time in *The Acts*. We see him extend the hand of brotherly love to Paul, and we listen to their concurrent testimony respecting the mystery of grace, the actual revelation of which constitutes the theme of *The Acts of the Apostles*.—*Besser*. And said—His speech was in accordance with the practical, forthright, non-argumentative turn of his mind.—*Farrar*. Ye know, says Peter, not: *Know ye!* He speaks, not as a dictator, but as a brother; he does not proclaim his will authoritatively, neither does he speak *ex cathedra*; but, with his brethren, presents himself before the throne of the sole Lord of the Church.—*Besser*. A good while ago—Ten or fourteen years, according to different schemes of chronology; a long time in proportion to the entire interval since the day of Pentecost.—*Jacobson*. The length of time elapsed is placed by Peter in the strongest light, to show that the question had in fact been settled by divine interference long since.—*Alford*. God made choice... by my mouth—The preaching of the Gospel, in consequence of which those pagans had become believers, was not exclusively his own (Peter's) work, but had at that time been assigned to the whole Church. God had chosen him merely on this special occasion.—*Lechler*.

8. God, which knoweth the hearts—To the Judeans a refusal to be circumcised was an evidence of imperfect repentance and consecration, as with us a refusal to be baptized or to make a public profession of faith. To this un-

Revised Version.

Brethren, ye know how that 'a good while ago God made choice among you, that by my mouth the Gen'tiles should hear the word of the gospel, and believe. And God, which knoweth the heart, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us; and he made no distinction between us and them,

10 cleansing their hearts by faith. Now therefore why tempt ye God, that ye should put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?

<sup>7</sup>Or, from early days.

expressed feeling Peter replies, The heart-knowing God (Jer. 17, 10) has borne witness to the genuineness of their godly character by giving to them the Holy Ghost.—*L. Abbott*. Giving them the Holy Ghost—As first to Cornelius and other Gentiles at Caesarea, (Acts 10,) and afterward to the Gentile Church at Antioch.

9. Put no difference [Rev. Ver., *Make no distinction*.]—Rather, recognized no difference; did not discriminate between them and us, having broken down by Christ the middle wall of partition between Jew and Gentile. See Eph. 2, 14.—*L. Abbott*. Purifying their hearts—The real uncleanness of the Gentiles was not in the body, as the Jews thought, but in the heart; and for that, faith, not circumcision, was the true remedy.—*Jacobson*. By faith—As explained by Peter himself, in 1 Pet. 1, 22, that faith which obeys the truth through the spirit unto unfeigned love. The essential truth underlying Peter's argument, and equally applicable to modern times, is, that he whose heart has been purified by the Spirit of God, and who gives evidence thereof by the fruits of the Spirit, as portrayed in Gal. 5, 22, 23, is a child of God, however he may fall short of the ecclesiastical requirements of the Church.—*L. Abbott*.

10. Why tempt ye God—By insisting on circumcision as an essential prerequisite for salvation, they tempted God; because they opposed his intentions, shown by the bestowal of the Holy Ghost, of receiving the Gentiles without circumcision into the Church.—*Gloag*. To put a yoke—The law of ceremonies imposed upon the Jews might well be called a yoke, if we consider: (1) Their number and variety; there were a multitude of legal observations. (2) Their

## Authorized Version.

11 But <sup>12</sup> we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they.

<sup>12</sup> Rom. 3, 24; Eph. 1, 7; 2, 8.

burden and difficulty: the ceremonial law was a most laborious administration of a very painful service. (3) They were very costly and chargeable: so many bullocks, rams, and lambs for sacrifice, that the misers of this age would think themselves undone with the expense. (4) Their insufficiency: they were only shadows of good things to come, and could not make the observers of them perfect.—*Barkitt*. **Our fathers**—Not Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to whom the seal of the Covenant was no burden, (Rom. 4. 9-12,) but the Israelites under Moses, and afterward. **Nor we**—A most remarkable appeal to the consciences of the Jews, especially as coming from the apostle of the circumcision.—*Jacobson*.

When oxen have long borne the yoke, and dragged heavy weights, all that they earn by their work, beyond their daily food, is to be struck on the head and be butchered: such is the experience of those who hope to be justified by the law. They are taken captive and burdened with a heavy yoke, and then, after they have long and painfully labored to do the works of the law, all that they finally earn is, to remain eternally poor and wretched servants.—*Luther*.

The Jewish ordinances were nothing else than the open exposure of man's misery.—*Beza*.

11. **But we believe**—*But through the grace of the Lord Jesus we trust to be saved, in which way they also*. This is the literal rendering of verse 11, which consummates the apostle's argument; the Jewish Christians are saved, not through circumcision, but through the grace of Jesus Christ; and that which does not bring salvation to the Jew cannot to the Gentile.—*L. Abbott*. **Grace . . . saved**—Peter here goes the full length of the Pauline doctrine—salvation by grace of Christ to Jew and Gentile alike.—*D. D. Whedon*. If I have read aright this narrative, it throws small light on methods of ecclesiastical procedure in New Testament times; it gives no authority for Church councils, as a divinely appointed method of settling questions in Church government or administration; but it attests the truth, which even the Church of Christ has not yet learned, that religion consists *wholly* in heart-life and its issues, not at all in any rite or ceremony, however sacred in origin or hallowed by usage; it points out the method of preventing ecclesiastical contentions and quarrels, and it indicates the difference between principle and

## Revised Version.

11 But we believe that we shall be saved through the grace of the Lord Je'sus, in like manner as they.

policy—the former to be held with inflexible tenacity; the latter to be readily yielded in accommodation to even unreasonable prejudices, (comp. ver. 20, 21, with Gal. 2. 5).—*L. Abbott*.

## Authorities to be Consulted.

Good commentaries on the Book of Acts for the teacher's use are those of Lyman Abbott, Paton J. Gloag, Dean Alford, (The New Testament for English Readers,) The Bible Commentary, generally known as the Speaker's Commentary, Dr. D. D. Whedon, E. H. Plumptre, (The Handy Commentary,) Albert Barnes, and Arnot's The Church in the House. The life of the Apostle Paul will be of great value in all these lessons, and should be studied. The leading works are those of Canon Farrar, Conybeare and Howson, and Lewin. We consider Farrar's as the best. On this period, Schaaf's History of the Apostolic Church, Fisher's Beginnings of Christianity, Neander's Planting of the Church, and Farrar's Early Days of Christianity, are also valuable. On this lesson, sermons by J. Edmondson, and Dr. Emmons. Foster's Cyclopaedia of Illustrations, [numbers marked by a star refer to the poetical volumes; all others to the prose,] ver. 1: 7017; 2: \*3151; 3: 8942; 5: 8819; 7: \*3456; 10: 7018.

## Practical Thoughts.

[SALVATION.]

1. In every age men have vainly rested their salvation upon ordinances and outward forms. Ver. 1.
2. Salvation is for all men, Jew and Gentile.
3. The news of salvation brings joy to all hearts in fellowship with God. Vers. 3.
4. Salvation through Christ emancipates from bondage to the law of ordinances. Ver. 5.
5. Salvation is proffered to all mankind upon the same terms of faith. Ver. 7.
6. Salvation has its inward witness in the testimony of the Holy Spirit to the heart. Ver. 8.
7. Salvation has its result in purity of heart and life. Ver. 10.
8. Salvation is through the grace of the Lord, and not by human righteousness. Ver. 11.

## Sermon Outline.

After God has given a great blessing to men as a right, it is almost always necessary to wrest it as



a *privilege* from those who have the power. So slaves have gained freedom; so the common people have obtained the privileges of holding property, gaining education, retaining office, and casting the ballot. The Jewish Church assumed that circumcision was the only key to the kingdom of God. Peter is here fighting our battle, and Paul afterward won and wrested from the unwilling hands of the "conservatives" the right of every Gentile Christian to be considered a child of God.

I. *Salvation through forms.*—In the beginning God committed his revealed religion to a single nation. This made the accident of birth and the rite of circumcision of the greatest importance. Gradually the Jew came to think that these privileges were his rights, and that he held every key to the favor of God, and that there was a saving power in these religious forms. In some such way men look at the rite of infant baptism, or attendance on Church services. But the new wine of the kingdom burst the old skins. The Jew thought religion was in danger when it was only his exclusive privileges and the old forms that were passing away.

II. *Salvation through grace.*—It was no more a

question of race or age or sex, but simply a question of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, that was to determine salvation. It came as the free gift of God to lost men, "without money or price." No man could merit it any more than did the Jew, but every man might now accept it. The ransom price had been paid, each one might go free. We are saved, not because we deserve it, but because Christ died.

III. *Salvation as an experience.* But it is not now confined to a question of interpreting the Scriptures. While the old Jews were studying the traditions, the Spirit of God was at work converting and saving the heathen. The new convert could put his experience against the questions of every Jewish priest in the land. He knew he was saved, even as James or John, and had the witness and fruits of the Spirit.

IV. *Application.*—Let no one build their hope of heaven on their privileges or their Church membership. Both of these are good, but an experience is better. And it is because you have the experience of being saved that you ought to become at once a member of Christ's Church.

HEARING AND DOING.—James 1. 16-27.

**GOLDEN TEXT.**—Be ye doers of the word and not hearers only.—JAMES 1. 22.

TIME.—A. D. 50, soon after the events of the last lesson. For rulers, etc., see Lesson I. Some commentators give the time as eleven years later.

PLACE.—This epistle was written from Jerusalem by James, the Lord's brother, to the Jewish disciples of Christ throughout the Roman Empire.

INTRODUCTION.—This epistle was designed, (1) To correct errors into which the Jewish Christians had fallen, especially relating to justification by faith. (2) To animate their hope and strengthen their faithful view of afflictions felt and feared. (3) To excite the unbelieving Jews to repentance toward God and faith in the rejected Messiah. In it the name of our blessed Lord occurs but twice, but with great reverence, as the Divine Master (chap. 1. 1) and "the Lord of glory," (chap. 2. 1.) The epistle strongly resembles the preaching of John the Baptist and the Sermon on the Mount. The main stress is laid on works rather than faith. It enforces an eminently practical Christianity, which manifests itself in good fruits.—*Schaff.*

Authorized Version.

16 Do not err, my beloved brethren.  
17 Every good gift and every perfect

Revised Version.

16 Be not deceived, my beloved brethren.  
17 Every good <sup>1</sup>gift and every

<sup>1</sup> Or, giving.

16. Do not err [Rev. Ver., *Be not deceived.*]—The succeeding verse shows that the error against which James is endeavoring to guard the disciples is the view that God is the author of sin, and that the evils of the world are to be traced to him. There was great danger that they would embrace that opinion, for experience has shown that it is a danger into which men are always prone to fall. To meet the danger, he says that, so far as it from being true that God

is the source of evil, he is in fact the author of all that is good: every good gift and every perfect gift (ver. 17) is from him. Ver. 18.—*Barnes.*

The best mode of opposing error is seldom directly to advert to it, but calmly and attractively to exhibit the opposite right and truth: for truth wins its own way. It affects, it warms, it invigorates, it controls, by its own proper and peculiar energy.—*Bp. Jebb.*

17. Every good gift . . . from above [Rev.

Authorized Version.

gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.

18 Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first-fruits of his creatures.

<sup>1</sup> Num. 23. 19; Mal. 3. 6.—<sup>2</sup> John 1. 13; 1 Cor. 4. 15; 1 Peter 1. 23.—<sup>3</sup> J. 1. 2. 3; Rev. 14. 4.

Ver., *Every good gift and every perfect boon.*—All good things flow from the upper spring. There are lower channels or conveyances, such as the written word, sacraments, prayer, meditation. And then for ordinary blessings there is your prudence and industry and care; but your freshest springs are in God, and in all things we may, and we must be, thankful, but look up.—*T. Manton.* **Father of lights**—The word *Father* here is used in a sense which is common in Hebrew as denoting that which is the source of any thing, or that from which any thing proceeds. **Of lights**—It seems now generally agreed that by the *lights* here is meant the *heavenly bodies*, and by *Father* the creator, originator, as in Job 38. 28: “*Who is the father of the rain?*” Being this, being the Father of those glorious fountains of light, and thus purer and clearer than they all, it cannot be that he should tempt to evil.—*Alford.* **No variableness** [Rev. Ver., *With whom can be no variation.*]—The design here is clearly to contrast God with the sun in a certain respect. As the source of light there is a strong resemblance. But in the sun there are certain changes. It does not shine on all parts of the earth at the same time, nor in the same manner all the year. It rises and sets; it crosses the line and seems to go far to the south, and sends its rays obliquely on the earth; then it ascends to the north, recrosses the line, and sends its rays obliquely on southern regions. By its revolutions it produces the changes of the seasons, and makes a constant variety on the earth in the productions of different climes. In this respect God is *not*, indeed, like the sun. With him there is *no* variableness, not even the appearance of turning. He is always the same at all seasons of the year and in all ages; there is no change in his character, his mode of being, his purposes and plans.—*Barnes.* **Nor shadow** [Rev. Ver., *Neither shadow that is cast by turning.*]—He has no change, not even the *shadow* of a change.—*Whedon.*

God is most free of his best blessings. He affords salvation in common to all his people. He gives honor and riches but to few of them: he

Revised Version.

perfect boon is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom can be no variation, neither shadow that is cast by turning. Of his own will he brought us forth by the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.

gives Christ and heaven to them all. God sometimes denies a crumb even to him on whom he bestows a kingdom. There are many things that a child of God cannot promise to himself, but heaven he may reckon upon.—*Jenkyn.*

18. **Of his own will**—The object of the statement here seems to be to direct the mind up to God as the source of *good* and not *evil*; and among the most eminent illustrations of his goodness is this, that by his mere *will*, without any external power to control him, and where there *could* be nothing but benevolence, he has adopted us into his family, and given us a most exalted condition, as renovated beings, among his creatures.—*Barnes.* **Begat he us** [Rev. Ver., *brought us forth*]—The change which God produces in men's dispositions and actions, by the truths of the Gospel impressed on their minds, is so great that it may be called a *begetting* or *creating* them anew.—*Macknight.* **Word of truth**—The preached Gospel was the external instrument by which he regenerated us.—*Whedon.* By this he convinces of sin; by this he reveals Christ as a suitable and all-sufficient Saviour; and having thus caused the souls whom he has touched to discover their own need, and Christ's fullness, he enables them by the gift of precious faith, called “the faith of God's elect,” to embrace God's record of his Son; to *appropriate* him and his work as an atonement for their sins, a righteousness for their persons, a sufficient title to the inheritance of eternal life. *F. Goode.* **First fruits**—The first gatherings of the harvest were by the Hebrews gratefully consecrated to God. Hence the word *first-fruits* symbolically indicates pre-eminent excellence and divine consecration. We are regenerated by divine unchanging will through the promulgated word, that among the *creatures* of God we may be the consecrated and truly *first* in rank and value.—*Whedon.* It is to be remembered that James is writing to *Jewish* Christians. He reminds them that in the harvest of souls they are the first-fruits, for the Gospel came “to the Jew first;” and that though the number of Jews who accepted Christ seemed small, yet

Authorized Version.

19 Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath:

20 For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.

21 Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the ingrafted word, which is able to save your souls.

\* Acts 13. 26; Rom. 1. 16; 1 Cor. 15. 2; Eph. 1. 13; Titus 2. 11; Heb. 2. 4; 1 Peter 1. 9.

they were the first sheaf in the great harvest of the world's salvation.

19. **Wherefore, my beloved brethren** [Rev. Ver., *Ye know this*].—To understand the emphasis laid by James in the rest of this chapter on moderation of language and candid listening, we must conceive something of a picture of discussions in the *synagogues* in which replies of cavilers could interrupt the Christian preacher. 1 Cor. 14. 27-33. The epistle, in its address, comprehends not only Christian Jews, but all Jews inclined to read and listen, and hence the importance of impressing the whole with the necessity of decency, candor, and readiness in a spirit of meekness to receive the word of the Gospel. Inquirers must calmly listen, they must learn in order to practice; but especially must they *bridle the tongue*, or else the pretenses and attempts at religion are futile.—*Whedon*. **Swift to hear**—The importance and brief opportunity of the truth demand quick and earnest listening. It is too valuable to be slighted, and to-morrow may be too late. **Slow to speak**—Our appropriate condition is rather that of *learners* than *instructors*; and the attitude of mind which we should cultivate is that of a readiness to receive information from any quarter. **Slow to wrath**—We should lay aside all anger and wrath, and should come to the investigation of truth with a calm mind and an unperturbed spirit. A state of wrath or anger is always unfavorable to the investigation of truth. Such an investigation demands a calm spirit, and he whose mind is excited or enraged is not in a condition to see the value of truth, or to weigh the evidence for it.—*Barnes*. *Tittmann* thinks not so much "wrath" is meant as an *indignant* feeling of *fratfulness* under the calamities to which the whole of the human life is exposed; this accords with the "divers temptations" in verse 2. Hastiness of temper hinders hearing God's word: so Naaman, 2 Kings 5. 11; Luke 4. 28.

20. **The wrath of man**—Be not intemperately zealous, hastily rash to speak and to be

Revised Version.

19 <sup>2</sup> Ye know *this*, my beloved brethren. But let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath:

20 for the wrath of man worketh not

21 the righteousness of God. Wherefore putting away all filthiness and overflowing of <sup>3</sup> wickedness, receive with meekness the <sup>4</sup> implanted word, which is able to save your souls.

<sup>2</sup> Or, *Know ye*.—<sup>3</sup> Or, *sinful*.—<sup>4</sup> Or, *instructed*.

angered, even in God's behalf; for this is implied; to be humble, ready to listen; for your angry zeal, your quick speaking, work not God's righteous purposes, serve not him, are not carriers forward of that righteousness which is the characteristic of his kingdom. Chap. 3. 18.—*A fford*. **Worketh not the righteousness**—A man is never sure of doing right under the influence of excited feelings; he *may* do that which is in the highest sense wrong, and which he will regret all his life. The particular meaning of this passage is, that wrath in the mind of man will not have any tendency to make him righteous.—*Barnes*.

21. **Lay apart** [Rev. Ver., *putting away*] all **filthiness**—It is very possible that the agricultural similitude in the word *implanted* [Rev. Ver.] may have influenced the choice of both these words, *filthiness* and *superabundance*. The ground must be ridged of all that pollutes and chokes it before the seed can sink in and come to maturity.—*A fford*. Sin may be contemplated as a *wrong* thing; as a violation of law; as evil in its nature and tendency, and therefore to be avoided; or it may be contemplated as *disgusting, offensive, loathsome*. To a pure mind this is one of its most odious characteristics; for to such a mind sin in any form is more loathsome than the most offensive object can be to any of the senses.—*Barnes*. **Superfluity of naughtiness** [Rev. Ver., *overflowing of wickedness*.]—He had just spoken of sin, in one aspect, as *filthy, loathsome, detestable*; here he designs to express his abhorrence of it by a still more emphatic description, and he speaks of it not merely as an *evil*, but as an evil *abounding, overflowing*; an evil in the highest degree. The thing referred to had the essence of *evil* in it; but it was not merely *evil*, it was evil that was aggravated, that was overflowing, that was eminent in degree. **Receive with meekness**—He compares the word to a plant of excellent virtue, the very tree of life, the word that is able to save your souls. But the only soil wherein

Authorized Version.

22 But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.

23 For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass:

24 For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was.

25 But <sup>6</sup>whoso looketh into the per-

<sup>5</sup> Luke 6. 47.—<sup>6</sup> 2 Cor. 3. 18.

it will grow is a heart full of meekness, a heart that is purged of those luxuriant weeds that grow so rank in it by nature; they must be plucked up and thrown out to make place for this word.—*Leighton*. The engrafted word [Rev. Ver., *the implanted word*.]—The allusion is apparently to the parable of the sower, and it is the word implanted, [equivalent to *which has been sown*.] the word whose attribute and virtue is to be *implanted*, and which *is implanted*, awaiting your reception of it to spring up and take up your being into it and make you new plants.—*Alford*. Able to save your souls—It is the *soul* which carries the personality of the man: which is between the *spirit* drawing it upward, and the *flesh* drawing it downward, and is saved or lost, passes into life or death, according to the choice between these two.—*Alford*.

22. But be ye doers of the word—(Viz., of the *implanted word*, *the word of truth*.) Observe, not only “do,” but *be doers*: the substantive means more than the verb; it carries an enduring, a sort of official, force with it: “let this be your occupation.”—*Alford*. Not hearers only, deceiving [Rev. Ver., *deluding*] your own selves—We imagine we are quite good, while in fact we are unsaved. Going to church, reading the Bible, and yet neglecting a holy life, is a delusive course.—*Whedon*. Do not then deceive yourselves on the ground of your having come eagerly to hear the word, if you do not perform what you inadequately hear.—*Augustine*.

23. Beholding his natural face—Literally, the face of his birth; the face he was born with, and which he had been in the habit of seeing all his life; and so the stranger that he should forget it the moment he ceases looking at it.—*Whedon*. In a glass [Rev. Ver., *in a mirror*]—The word *glass* here means *mirror*. Glass was not commonly used for mirrors among the ancients, but they were made of polished plates

Revised Version.

22 But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deluding your own

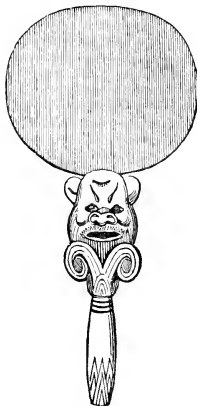
23 selves. For if any one is a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding <sup>5</sup>his natural

24 face in a mirror: for he beholdeth himself, and goeth away, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man

25 he was. But he that looketh into

<sup>5</sup> Gr. *the face of his birth*.

of metal. When we hear the word of God it is like a mirror held up before us. In the perfect precepts of the law, and the perfect requirements of the Gospel, we see our own shortcomings



Ancient Mirror.

ings and defects, and perhaps think that we will correct them. But we turn away immediately, and forget it all.—*Barnes*.

24. Straightway forgetteth—A curious and inexplicable fact, that, however clearly we behold ourself *in the glass*, we retain no distinct impression of our own face. If walking down the street, he could meet himself, he would not, by the countenance, recognize himself. So the man who beholds his own spiritual character and moral destiny in the *word*, as in a *glass*, may pass away and retain no true impression.—*Whedon*.

25. But whoso looketh into—The man is not now standing and transiently looking into a mirror; he is bending down and poring

Authorized Version.

fect law of liberty, and continueth *therein*, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.

26 If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridled his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain.

27 Pure religion and undefiled before

John 13. 17.—a Or, doing

steadily, as it were, into a book, just as the cherubim stooped down on the ark to look at the decalogue.—*Whedon*. The perfect law—Not the Gospel as contrasted with the law, nor the covenant of faith as more perfect than that of legal obedience; but the rule of life as revealed in the Gospel, which is perfect and perfecting.—*Alford*. The perfect law of liberty [Rev. Ver., *The perfect law, the law of liberty*.]—That law which, when studied in its own spirit and with gracious aids, is obeyed with such glad spontaneity that the most perfect obedience is the most perfect liberty. Continueth—To look and meditate therein, instead of *straightway* going his way. The holy volume stirs his heart and attracts his intense study. Not a forgetful hearer [Rev. Ver., *not a hearer that forgetteth*.]—For what so stirs, fascinates, and fixes him, writes itself indelibly on his memory.—*Whedon*. Blessed in his deed [Rev. Ver., *in his doing*.]—The words imply that even in the act there is blessing: the life of obedience is the element wherein the blessedness is found and consists.—*Alford*. It will produce peace of conscience; it will impart happiness of a high order to his mind; it will exert a good influence over his whole soul. Psa. 19. 11: "In keeping of them there is great reward."

The Gospel is called the law of liberty, (1) Because it delivers men from the slavery of their hearts, and restores the dominion of reason and conscience in their minds, which is true liberty. (2) Because it hath freed the Jews from the law of Moses, which was a yoke of bondage they were not able to bear. (3) Because it delivers all true believers from the punishment of sin. (4) Because it assures us that in the eye of God all men are on a level, and equally entitled to the privileges of the Gospel. (5) Because it forbids the acceptance of persons in judgment. Chap. 2. 12.—*Macknight*.

Religious truth cannot be of the intellect only. It must, if it be held vitally, show itself in life.—*B. F. Westcott*.

26. Seem to be—Rev. Ver. has *thinketh himself to be*, which is better, and expresses the em-

Revised Version.

the perfect law, the law of liberty, and so continueth, being not a hearer that forgetteth, but a doer that worketh, this man shall be blessed in his doing. If any man thinketh himself to be religious, while he bridled his tongue but deceiveth his heart, this man's religion is vain. 27 Pure religion and undefiled before

John, seemeth to be.

phasis on "deceiveth his heart." Religious—Rather, as the Greek signifies, *worshipful*; strict and regular in formal worship, a due performer of synagogue service. The word emphasizes the external rite without excluding the internal devotion. *Ritualism*, in a good sense, nearly expresses it.—*Whedon*. Bridled his tongue—As a steed which must be checked with bit and bridle. Religion in the heart, if it be true and complete, will control every passion within and every action without. Deceiveth his own heart By making himself believe that he is religious when he is only ritualistic.—*Whedon*. That man's religion is vain The idea of the writer is that all merely outward ritualism and religious service is useless. It does not mean that the utterance of a passionate word proves that the one who uttered it has no true religion. For the word here translated "religion" means only its outward forms. A man's church attendance and religious forms are vain unless they influence his life.

27. Pure religion—We must keep in mind just what James means in the word translated *religion*; not religion in its essence in the heart, nor faith in Christ; but its outward acts. Perhaps the word "worshipfulness" would express his idea. That worshipful habit alone is pure and undefiled in God's sight which has its proper effect upon the character and the conduct. If it fails to make the worshiper holy and helpful, it is vain; if it results in deeds of charity and a life of purity, it is genuine and acceptable to God. Not that deeds of philanthropy or a blameless character have saving power in themselves, but that these are an index of the heart within. And undefiled—*Rosenmüller* supposes that there is a metaphor here taken from pearls or gems, which should be pure, or without stain. *Pure* is that love which has in it *no foreign admixture*, as self-deceit and hypocrisy. *Undefiled* is the means of its being *pure*.—*Tittmann*. Before God—Not in the eyes of men, but in the sight of God, who tries all hearts. Is this—Or results in this. If a man is truly benevolent, he

Authorized Version.

God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, *and* to keep himself unspotted from the world.

\* Isa. 1. 16; 1 Tim. 1. 5.—9 Rom. 12. 2.

bears the image of that God who is the fountain of benevolence; if he is pure and uncontaminated in his walk and deportment, he also resembles his Maker, for he is holy.—*Barnes.* To visit the fatherless—Orphans and widows in the East are in a peculiarly helpless and pitiful condition. They are named as general types of all who need assistance: and a reference to service in their behalf includes all acts of benevolence. Unspotted from the world—Not merely earthly things as far as they tempt to sin; still less the natural evil disposition of men; but, as in chap. 4. 4, *the whole earthly creation*, separated from God, and lying in sin, which, whether considered as consisting in the men who serve it, or the enticements which it holds out to evil lusts, is to Christians a source of continual defilement. They, by their new birth under God, are taken out of the world; but at the same time, by sin still dwelling in them, are ever liable to be enticed and polluted by it; and therefore must keep themselves (1 Tim. 6. 14) for fear of such pollution.—*Alford.*

Authorities to be Consulted.

See Farrar's Early Days of Christianity, book iv, chaps. xix-xliii. Schaff's Apostolic Church, pp. 377, 382. Sermons, by S. L. Pomroy in National Preacher on The Unchangeable God; H. Blair, The Unchangeableness of the Divine Nature; H. Binney, Regeneration and Renewal; R. Hall, The Cause, Agent, and Purpose of Regeneration; A. D. Smith, Half-Day Hearers, (National Preacher;) J. Howe, Hearing and Obeying the Word; C. G. Finney, Self-Deceivers; H. E. Manning, Danger of Mistaking Knowledge for Obedience; J. Sumnerfield, Pure Religion; T. Guthrie, Doing Good and Being Good. Preacher's Lantern, iv, 379; iii, 185. Pulpit Analyst, ii, 31. Foster's Cyclopaedia, [numbers marked with a star refer to poetical volumes,] ver. 16; \*1113, 3997; 17: 2484, 9008; 18: 4123; 19: 5317, 5628; 22: 2813, 2818; 23, 24: 2312; 24: 9361; 26: 5739, 12014; 27: 4276.

Practical Thoughts.

[THE DOER OF THE WORD.]

1. The doer of the word has for his supreme motive gratitude to God for his mercies. Ver. 17.

Revised Version.

our God and Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, *and* to keep himself unspotted from the world.

2. The doer of the word regards himself as the first-fruits of creation, converted to God. Ver. 18.
3. The doer of the word strives to hold his impulses and utterances under the control of wisdom. Ver. 19.
4. The doer of the word aims for a righteousness according to God's will. Ver. 20.
5. The doer of the word separates himself from all that would hinder the growth of the word in his heart. Ver. 21.
6. The doer of the word recognizes his own needs, and ever keeps his true condition in mind. Vers. 23, 25.
7. The doer of the word contemplates God's law as the soul's highest liberty. Ver. 25.
8. The doer of the word aims both to be good and to do good. Ver. 27.

Sermon Outline.

BY REV. JESSE BOWMAN YOUNG, A.M.

Among the lessons of this passage there is one which echoes in startling and alarming words throughout the paragraph, as indeed also throughout the Scriptures, the truth that *sin is deceitful and treacherous*, that men are in constant danger from its delusions and snares. "Be not deceived," is the first word of admonition spoken here in setting forth the deceitfulness of sin. This is followed by the caution which urges men to be doers of the word, not hearers only, deluding their own selves. Further, we are told of the man who bridleth not his tongue, that he deceiveth his own heart. Thus the apostle, discerning the real character of evil, peering with keen insight into its disguises, unmasking its hypocrisies, warns men against self-deception, and cries out: "Beware of sin. Take heed lest ye be blinded by its delusions, led astray by its allurements, hardened by its deceitfulness."

It is hardly needful to suggest that this truth is brought to view constantly in the Bible. In the pictures which it gives of the workings, the ruinous operations of sin, in the voice of the awakened sinner heard crying out, "Sin deceived me, beguiled me, slew me;" in the exhortations and appeals of prophet and apostle; in the lying promises made by the tempter in Eden—"Ye shall not die, ye shall be as gods;" and in the final testimony concerning the same crafty agent and leader of the powers of darkness, "He deceiveth the whole world," from the opening to the close of the book, this terrible truth arrests attention, that the very essence

[Continued on page 309.]

A. D. 50.]

LESSON III.

[Jan. 20.]

THE POWER OF THE TONGUE.—James 3. 1-18.

**GOLDEN TEXT.**—By thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned. — MATT. 12. 37.

TIME.—A. D. 50. See on Lesson I.

CONNECTING LINKS.—The topics of the epistle, following the last lesson, are: (1) The duty of impartiality, chapter 2. 1-13. (2) The relation between faith and works, chapter 2. 14-26.

INTRODUCTION.—It is not easy to see any connection between what is said in this chapter and what is found in other parts of the epistle. The design seems to have been to notice such things as the apostle supposed claimed his attention, without particular regard to a logical connection. Some of the errors and improprieties which existed among them had been noticed in the previous chapters, and others are referred to in chapters 4, 5. Those which are noticed in this chapter grew out of the desire of being public teachers of religion. It seems probable that he had this subject in his eye in the whole of this chapter, and this will give a clew to the course of thought which he pursues. Let it be supposed that there was a prevailing desire among those to whom he wrote to become public teachers, without much regard for the proper qualifications for that office, and the interpretation of the chapter will become easy.—Barnes.

## Authorized Version.

1 My brethren, <sup>1</sup>be not many masters, knowing <sup>2</sup>that we shall receive the greater <sup>3</sup>condemnation.

2 For <sup>3</sup>in many things we offend all.

<sup>1</sup> Matt. 23. 8. Rom. 2. 20, 21. 1 Peter 5. 3.—<sup>2</sup> Luke 6. 37.—<sup>3</sup> Or, judgment.—<sup>1</sup> 1 Kings 5. 46; 2 Chron. 6. 36. Prov. 20. 9; Eccl. 7. 20; 1 John 1. 8.

1. My brethren.—Our apostle's stand-point is still in the Christian *synagogues*, where he is checking the errors and faults of his *brethren*.—Whedon. Be not many masters [Rev. Ver., teachers.]—The word here rendered *masters* should have been rendered *teachers*. It is so rendered in John 3. 2; Acts 13. 1; Rom. 2. 20; 1 Cor. 12. 28, 29; Eph. 4. 11; 1 Tim. 2. 11; 4. 3; Heb. 5. 12, though it is elsewhere frequently rendered *master*. It has, however, in it primarily the notion of *teaching*, even when rendered *master*; and the word *master* is often used in the New Testament, as it is with us, to denote an *instructor* as the "school-master."—Barnes. This did not forbid the expression of Christian experience and interchange of exhortation and counsel by the *many*. Nor did it forbid catechists and imparters of the elements of established Christian knowledge to be *many*. Nor does it forbid Sabbath-school instructors at the present day, who are happily very *many*; but it reprehends self-conceited and self-appointed doctrinaires, ready to blurt their individual notions and maintain them in the assemblies. The result would be crude theologies, heated disputations, and erratic sects and heresies.—Whedon. Receive the greater condemnation [Rev. Ver., heavier judgment.]—Or rather, a severe judgment; that is, we shall have a severe trial, and give a stricter account. The

## Revised Version.

3 Be not many teachers, my brethren, knowing that we shall receive <sup>1</sup>heav-

2 ier judgment. For in many things

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *grater*.

word here used does not necessarily here mean *condemnation*, but *judgment, trial, account*; and the consideration which the apostle suggests is not that those who were public teachers would be *condemned*, but that there would be a much more solemn account to be rendered by them than by other men, and that they ought duly to reflect on this in seeking the office of the ministry.—Barnes.

This "itch of teaching," this oracular egotism, is the natural result of vanity and selfishness disguising themselves under the cloak of Gospel proselytism. With all such men words take the place of works, and dogmatizing contentiousness of peace and love. Therefore he warns them against being many teachers—self-constituted ministers—"other people's bishops," (1 Pet. 14. 15.) persons of that large class who assume that no incompetence is too absolute to rob them of the privilege of infallibility in laying down the law of truth for others.—Farrar.

2. In many things.—If anywhere the improper use of the tongue will do mischief, it is in the office of a religious teacher; and to show the danger of this, and the importance of caution in seeking that office, the apostle proceeds to show what mischief the *tongue* is capable of effecting.—Barnes. We.—He joins himself with the persons to whom he wrote, to mitigate the harshness of his reproof.—Macknight. We offend all [Rev. Ver., We all stumble.]—The mere Eu-

## Authorized Version.

'If any man offend not in word, <sup>5</sup> the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body.

3 Behold, we put bits in the horses' mouths, that they may obey us; and we turn about their whole body.

4 Behold also the ships, which though they be so great, and are driven of fierce winds, yet are they turned about with a

<sup>4</sup> Psa. 34. 13; 1 Peter 3. 10.—<sup>5</sup> Matt. 12. 37.

glish reader is very apt to understand our translation to mean, *we offend every body*; making all the object. The true meaning is, that in many things we all stumble; that is, make intellectual and moral mistakes and blunders; which is true enough of the wisest and holiest of us. And, therefore, our apostle cautions us to avoid setting up for too much. — *Whedon*. This is a metaphor taken from persons who, in walking on slippery or rough ground, slide or stumble without falling; as is plain from Rom. 11. 11.—*Mucknight*. If any man offend not [Rev. Ver., *If any stumbleth not*.]—In word—In performance of his assumption to be a teacher in the *synagogue*. A perfect man—Perfect in the sense in which the apostle immediately explains himself; that he is able to keep every other member of his body in subjection.—*Barnes*. Able also—For, so far as he is able to speak perfectly right, it is probable that he can do perfectly right. The wisdom and moral power with which he can govern his tongue is very likely to govern his whole body.—*Whedon*. To bridle—The word rendered "to bridle" means to lead or guide with a bit; then to rein in, to check, to moderate, to restrain. A man always has complete government over himself if he has the entire control of his tongue.—*Barnes*. His whole body—The body, as the whole organ of the soul, with its susceptibilities to temptation, and its limbs as the instruments of right or wrong, as the *I*, the will, directs.—*Whedon*.

Few men suspect how much mere talk fritters away spiritual energy—that which should be spent in action spends itself in words. The fluent boaster is not the man who is steadiest before the enemy. Loud utterance of virtuous indignation against evil from the platform, or in the drawing-room, is wasted, taken away from the work of coping with evil; the man has so much less left. And hence he who restrains that love of talk lays up a fund of spiritual strength.—*F. W. Robertson*.

3. We put bits [Rev. Ver., *Now, if we put the horses' bridles into their mouths, etc., we turn*

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we all stumble. If any stumbleth not in word, the same is a perfect man, able to bridle the whole body also. Now if we put the horses' bridles into their mouths, that they may obey us, we turn about their whole body also. Behold, the ships also, though they are so great, and are driven by rough winds, are yet

*about their whole body also*.]—This mention of *bridling*, and the situation of the tongue where the *bridle* also is placed, introduce this similitude: *bridle* and *mouth* being ideas already given by the context.—*Alford*. That they may obey us—In order to their obeying us, (thus showing, by the expression of their purpose, that we recognize the principle of turning the whole body by the tongue.) We turn about their whole body—As a horseman with bits turns the whole horse; so a speaker with a persuasive tongue will turn a whole man, nay, a whole body of men. The tongue of the eloquent orator turns whole assemblies, and controls the destinies of states. And so the tongue of the wily errorist may turn a whole Church, may introduce a strange doctrine, or establish a new sect. And so the unrestrained tongues of a *synagogue* may raise a great buzz, and produce disorder and every evil work. Hence the importance of Church unity under the control of apostolic teaching.—*Whedon*.

The grace of God is both spur and bridle to the tongue of man; grace, like a spur, provokes to speak for God, and for the good of others; and grace, like a bridle, stops us from speaking what may grieve the Spirit of God, and justly offend others.—*Burkitt*.

4. Behold also the ships—A ship is a large object. It seems to be unmanageable by its vastness, and is also impelled by driving storms. Yet it is easily managed by a small rudder, and he that has control of that has control of the ship itself. So with the tongue. It is a small member as compared with the body; in its size not unlike the rudder as compared with the ship. Yet the proper control of the tongue in respect to its influence on the whole man is not unlike the control of the rudder in its power over the ship.—*Barnes*. Driven of fierce [Rev. Ver., *rough*] winds—Bede interprets this as having a meaning respecting ourselves, the winds being the appetites and passions. Turned about with a very small helm—The ancient rudder,



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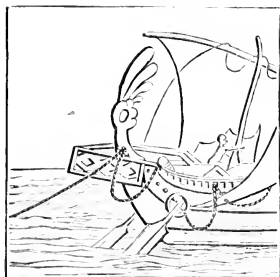
very small helm, whithersoever the governor listeth.

5 Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold how great <sup>6</sup>a matter a little fire kindleth!

6 And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that <sup>7</sup>it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell.

<sup>4</sup> Or, wood.— <sup>5</sup> Matt. 13. 11, 18, 19, 20; Mark 7. 15; 20, 23.—  
<sup>7</sup> Wheel.

or helm, was made in the shape of an ear. This was very small when compared with the size of



Ancient Rudders.

the vessel—about as small as the tongue is as compared with the body.—*Barnes*. Whithersoever the governor listeth [Rev. Ver., *Whither the impulse of the steersman willeth.*] Behold how great [Rev. Ver., *Behold how much wood (margin, forest) is kindled by how small a fire.*]—“*How great a forest.*” The words also sometimes signalized “matter,” and thus the A. V. But the ordinary meaning, *forest*, gives a far livelier and more graphic sense here.—*Alford*.

5. The tongue is a little member—The especial point is, that the smallness of the tongue should not blind us to the importance of controlling it by the conscience, but, in fact, arouse us to the thought of the greatness of its effects and the importance of its control.—*Wheldon*. Boasteth great things—Claims to have great power, and is fully conscious of its importance; an importance which it really possesses. The city of Portland, Maine, was laid in ashes from a fire kindled by a fire-cracker on the Fourth of

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turned about by a very small rudder, whither the impulse of the steersman 5 willeth. So the tongue also is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold, <sup>2</sup>how much wood is kindled 6 by how small a fire! And the tongue is <sup>3</sup>a fire: <sup>4</sup>the world of iniquity among our members is the tongue, which defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the wheel of <sup>5</sup>nature, 7 and is set on fire by hell. For every

<sup>2</sup> Or, how great a forest.—<sup>3</sup> Or, a fire, that world of iniquity; the tongue is among our members that which, etc.—<sup>4</sup> Or, thus a lid set out, etc., the tongue, is among our members that which, etc.—<sup>5</sup> Or, birth.

July; and the burning of Chicago came from a kerosene lamp kicked over by a cow.

You cannot stop the consequences of a slander; you may publicly prove its falsehood; you may sift every atom, explain and annihilate it, and yet, years after you had thought that all had been disposed of forever, the mention of a name wakes up associations in the mind of some one who heard the calumny, but never heard or never attended to the refutation, or who has only a vague and confused recollection of the whole.—*F. W. Robertson*.

6. A world of iniquity—A complete repertory of all wickedness, as the world is of all things.—*Alford*. Defileth the whole body—When a man speaks evil he will commit it. When the tongue has the boldness to talk of sin, the rest of the members have the boldness to act. First we think, then speak, then do.—*Manton*. The course of nature [Rev. Ver., *the whole of nature.*]—To this peculiar expression different meanings have been assigned. *Alford*, *Farrar*, and others translate, “the orb or cycle of creation,” and regard it as referring to the material universe, spoken of figuratively, as “setting the whole world on fire.” *Barnes* has “the wheel of birth;” the wheel set in motion at birth, and running on through life; or the affairs of the world as they roll on from age to age, all enkindled by the tongue, and keeping the world in a constant blaze of excitement. *Wheldon* translates “the wheel of generation,” and makes it refer to the human body, with its alimentary, sexual, and passional appetites, so powerfully affected by the tongue. The first view seems to have the sanction of the Revised Version. Set on fire of hell—It is the devil, for whom hell is prepared, that is the tempter and instigator of the habitual sins of the tongue. It is out of the question to regard the sentence as alluding to the original temptations of the fall;

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7 For every <sup>d</sup> kind of beasts, and of birds, and of serpents, and of things in the sea, is tamed, and hath been tamed of <sup>e</sup> mankind:

8 But the tongue can no man tame; *it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison.*

9 Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are <sup>f</sup> made after the similitude of God.

<sup>d</sup> Nature.—<sup>e</sup> Nature of man.—<sup>f</sup> Gen. 1. 26; 5. 1; 9. 6; 1 Cor. 11. 7.

equally so, to suppose it to have a future reference, and to imply that the tongue shall be tormented in hell.—*Alford*.

If vain words, the signs and immediate effects of a vain mind, shall sadly increase our accounts, how much more all the contentious, fierce, and revengeful words; the detracting, false, contumelious, and injurious words; the impure, filthy, and contagious words; the profane, blasphemous, and impious words that “flow from the evil treasure of the heart”? O, their dreadful number and oppressing weight!—*Bates*.

7. Every kind of beasts—Literally, every nature; where, as Huther well remarks, not the taming of individuals is meant, but of the brutal natures. The natures of the four great orders here enumerated have been brought under control by the nature and genius of man.—*Whe-don*. Is tamed, and hath been tamed—The examples given by Pliny, of creatures tamed by men, relate to elephants, lions, and tigers, among beasts; to the eagle, among birds; to asps, and other serpents; and to crocodiles and various fishes, among the inhabitants of the water. The lion was very commonly tamed by the ancient Egyptians, and trained to assist both in hunting and in war.—*Kitto*. It is to be remembered that nearly all those beasts which we now speak of as “domestic animals,” and which we are accustomed to see only when they are tame, were once fierce and savage races. This is the case with the horse, the ox, the ass, the swine, the dog, the cat, etc.—*Burnes*.

8. The tongue can no man tame—The apostle does not say none can tame the tongue, but “no man;” no human art or power can find a sufficient remedy or curb for it. The horse, the camel, the elephant, do not tame themselves, nor man himself. Man tames the beast, but *God tames man*.—*Manton*. It is an unruly evil—The Greek implies that it is at once restless and incapable of restraint. Nay, though nature has hedged it in a double barrier of the lips and teeth, it bursts from its barriers to assail

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<sup>6</sup> kind of beasts and birds, of creeping things and things in the sea, is tamed, and hath been tamed <sup>7</sup> by <sup>8</sup> mankind;

8 but the tongue can no man tame; *it is a restless evil, it is full of deadly*

9 poison. Therewith bless we the Lord and Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after 10 the likeness of God: out of the same

<sup>6</sup> Gr. nature.—<sup>7</sup> Or, unto.—<sup>8</sup> Gr. the human nature.

and ruin men.—*Estius*. Full of deadly poison—There is no sting of a serpent that does so much evil in the world; there is no poison more deadly to the frame than the poison of the tongue is to the happiness of man. Who, for example, can stand before the power of the slanderer? What mischief can be done in society that can be compared with that which he may do?—*Burnes*.

Socrates, when asked what was the beast most dangerous to man, answered, “Of tame beasts, the flatterer; of wild beasts, the slanderer.”

Nature has set a double guard about the tongue, namely, the teeth and the lips, and grace has laid many restraints upon it, and yet it breaks out full of deadly poison: intimating that the tongue is as deadly as a venomous beast.—*Burkitt*.

9. Therewith bless we—In verses 9 and 10 our apostle passes beyond the limits of the Christian *synagogue* into the length and breadth of the *twelve tribes*. And his *we* includes himself, by courtesy, even among the profane users of the tongue.—*Whe-don*. God, even the Father [Rev. Ver., the Lord and Father.]—Both terms are to be taken of the Father: the former on the side of his power; the latter on that of his love.—*Alford*. Curse we men—Perhaps the apostle in this glanced at the unconverted Jews who, as Justin Martyr informs us in his dialogue with Trypho the Jew, often cursed the Christians bitterly in their synagogues.—*Macknight*. The likeness of God—Which remains in us, marred indeed, but not, as is sometimes carelessly said, destroyed. This likeness we ought to revere in ourselves and in others, and he who curses despises it. Not man’s original state, but man’s present state, is here under consideration, and on that consideration depends the force of the apostle’s argument.—*Alford*.

Party spirit has always been a curse and a disease of every religion, even of the Christian. The formulas of Christian councils have been tagged with anathemas; Te Deums have been chanted at Autos da Fé.—*Farrar*.

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10 Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be.

11 Doth a fountain send forth at the same place sweet water and bitter?

12 Can the fig tree, my brethren, bear olive berries? either a vine, figs? so can no fountain both yield salt water and fresh.

13 Who <sup>is</sup> a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? let him show out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom.

14 But if ye have <sup>9</sup> bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth.

15 This <sup>10</sup> wisdom descendeth not

*f*Or, hole.—<sup>9</sup>Gal. 6. 4.—<sup>10</sup>Rom. 13. 15.—<sup>10</sup>Phil. 3. 19.

**10-12. Same mouth . . . blessing and cursing**—The tongue, says Esop, is at once the best and the worst of things. So in a fable, a man with the same breath blows hot and cold.—*D. Brown.* **Ought not so to be**—The same heart cannot be occupied by God and the devil, nor the same tongue be employed to such different uses.—*Manton.* **Fountain, at the same place** [Rev. Ver., *opening*.]—Hole from which the water flows, in a rock, or in the earth. **Fig-tree . . . olive berries**—The reasoning is not, here, that we must not look for good fruit from a bad tree, but that no tree can bring forth fruit inconsistent with its own nature. **Salt water and fresh**—That is, if the mouth emit cursing, thereby making itself a brackish spring, it cannot to any purpose also emit the sweet stream of praise and good words; if it appear to do so, all must be hypocrisy and mere seeming.—*Alford.*

**13. Who is a wise man**—This is spoken with reference to the work of public teaching, and the meaning of the apostle is, that if there were such persons among them, they should be selected for that office.—*Barnes.* **Let him show**—Like a good fountain let him pour forth the *sweet* and not the *bitter* stream, like a good tree, the right fruit.—*Whedon.* **Out of a good conversation** [Rev. Ver., *by his good life*.]—The term here rendered "conversation," signifies the whole action of life, the development of character, the way a man works, turns, or behaves himself in the world. The use of knowledge is to guide and elevate the life.—*Bishop Huntington.* **His works**—His acts of uprightness and piety. He should be a man of a holy life.—*Barnes.* **Meekness of wisdom**—In that

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mouth cometh forth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things

11 ought not so be. Doth the fountain send forth from the same opening sweet water and bitter? can a fig tree, my brethren, yield olives, or a vine figs? neither can salt water yield sweet.

13 Who is wise and understanding among you? let him shew by his good life his works in meekness of

14 wisdom. But if ye have bitter jealousy and faction in your heart, glory not and lie not against the truth.

15 This wisdom is not a wisdom that

meekness which is the proper attribute of wisdom. The truly wise man is always characterized by a calm spirit, a wise and placid demeanor, and by a gentle, though firm, enunciation of his sentiments.—*Barnes.*

Meekness is love at school—love at the Saviour's school. It is Christian lowliness. It is the disciple learning to know himself; learning to fear and distrust and abhor himself. It is the disciple practicing the sweet but self-emptying lesson of putting on the Lord Jesus, and finding all his righteousness in that righteous Lord. It is the disciple learning the defects of his own character and taking hints from hostile as well as friendly monitors. It is the disciple praying and watching for the improvement of his talents, the mellowing of his temper, and the amelioration of his character. It is the living Christian at the Saviour's feet, learning of him who is meek and lowly, and finding rest for his own soul.—*Hamilton.*

**14. If ye have bitter envying and strife** [Rev. Ver., *bitter jealousy and faction*.]—There is reference here to a fierce and unholy zeal against each other; a spirit of ambition and contention. **Glory not**—Do not boast in such a case of your qualification to be public teachers. Nothing would render you more unfit for such an office than such a spirit.—*Barnes.* **Lie not against the truth**—By depreciating its excellence in order to exalt your worldly views. The worldly emulous spirit fancies itself to be infinitely superior to the *meekness and wisdom* of the Gospel, having a lordlier *wisdom* of its own, and *this wisdom* James characterizes in the next verse.—*Whedon.*

**15. This wisdom descendeth not** [Rev. Ver., *is not a wisdom that cometh down*.]—In the

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from above, but *is* earthly, <sup>9</sup>sensual, devilish.

16 For <sup>11</sup>where envying and strife *is*, there *is* <sup>4</sup>confusion and even evil work.

17 But <sup>12</sup>the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of

<sup>9</sup>Or, natural; Jude 19.—<sup>11</sup>1 Cor. 3. 3.—<sup>4</sup>Tumult, or, unquietness.—<sup>12</sup>1 Cor. 2. 6.

contentions which are in the world, in Church and State, in neighborhoods and families, at the bar, in political life, and in theological dispute; even where there is the manifestation of enraged and irascible feeling, there is often much of a certain kind of *wisdom*. There is learning, shrewdness, tact, logical skill, subtle and skillful argumentation—"making the worse appear the better reason;" but all this is often connected with a spirit so narrow, bigoted, and contentious, as to show clearly that it has not its origin in heaven.—*Barnes*. **Is earthly**—It is such as men exhibit who are governed only by worldly maxims and principles.—*Barnes*. **Sensual** [Rev. Ver., margin, *animal*.]—It is almost impossible to express satisfactorily in English the idea given by the original word here, [*psychic*, from *psyché*, the soul.] Our "soul" is so identified with man's spiritual part, in common parlance, that we have lost the distinction between *soul* and *spirit*, except when we can give a periphrastic explanation. The idea here is, belonging to the unspiritual mind of man.—*Alford*. **Devilish**—This word must not be figuratively taken; it betokens both the origin of this hypocritical wisdom [compare *set on fire by hell*, above, verse 6] and its character; it is from, not God, the giver of all true wisdom, (chapter 1. 5,) but the devil, and bears the character of its author.—*Alford*.

**16. Whose envying and strife** [Rev. Ver., *jealousy and faction*.]—The characteristics of this worldly *wisdom* are *envying*, rather, *emulation* and *strife*, or *rivalry*. It is the *wisdom* of making yourself great in disregard of the rights and well-being of all or any others.—*Whedon*. **Confusion and every evil work** [Rev. Ver., *every vile deed*.]—Of the truth of this no one can have any doubt who has observed the effects in a family or neighborhood where a spirit of strife prevails. All love and harmony of course are banished; all happiness disappears; all prosperity is at an end. In place of the peaceful virtues which ought to prevail, there springs up every evil passion that tends to mar the peace of a community. Where this spirit prevails in a

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cometh down from above, but is 16 earthly, <sup>9</sup>sensual, <sup>10</sup>devilish. For where jealousy and faction are, there is confusion and every vile deed. 17 But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, easy to be intreated, full of mercy

<sup>9</sup>Or, natural, Or, animal.—<sup>10</sup>Gr. *demoniacal*.

church, it is of course impossible to expect any progress in divine things; and in such a church any effort to do good is vain.—*Barnes*.

**17. The wisdom that is from above**—The meaning here is, that the first and immediate effect of religion is not on the intellect, to make it more enlightened; or on the imagination to make it more discursive and brilliant; or on the memory and judgment, to make them clearer and stronger; but it is to *purify* the heart, to make the man upright, inoffensive, and good. This passage should not be applied, as it often is, to the *doctrines* of religion, as if it were the first duty of a church to keep itself free from errors in doctrine, and that this ought to be sought even in preference to the maintenance of peace—as if it meant that in doctrine a church should be "*first pure, then peaceable*," but it should be applied to the *individual consciences of men*, as showing the effect of religion on the heart and life.—*Barnes*. **First pure**—To be *pure* is to be untainted by the tempers expressed in verse 16.—*Whedon*. The wisdom is only said to be "*first pure*," because "*purity*" describes its inward essence, and the other epithets its outward manifestations.—*Farrar*. **Peaceable**—In antithesis against *envying* and *strife*, verse 16. **Gentle**—Every one has a clear idea of the virtue of *gentleness*—gentleness of spirit, of deportment, and of manners; and every one can see that that is the appropriate spirit of religion. It is from this word that we have derived the word *gentleman*; and the effect of true religion is to make every one, in the proper and best sense of the term, a *gentleman*.—*Barnes*. **Easy to be entreated**—It means *easily persuaded, compliant*. Of course, this refers only to cases where it is right and proper to be easily persuaded and complying. It cannot refer to things which are in themselves wrong. The sense is, that he who is under the influence of the wisdom which is from above is not a stiff, stern, obstinate, unyielding man. He does not take a position, and then hold it whether right or wrong; he is not a man on whom no arguments or persuasions can have any influ-

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mercy and good fruits, 'without partiality,<sup>13</sup> and without hypocrisy.

18 And<sup>14</sup> the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace.

<sup>13</sup> Or, without wrangling.—<sup>14</sup> 1 Peter 1. 22.—<sup>15</sup> Matt. 5. 6.

ence.—*Barnes*. Without partiality, [Rev. Ver., *without variance*] and without hypocrisy—These two clauses are two Greek words in the original which have similar terminations, and so make a word-echo. We might nearly parallel them by the words *without hypocritical nor hypocritical*. The first of the two Greek words may signify, making no undue distinctions, (hence *fair, impartial*), as, for instance, between rich and poor. Or, it may mean unequivocal, unambiguous, clear from equivocation or just liability to being doubted. The latter of the two words is, accordingly, rendered rightly in the English translation. We might (with these last definitions of the two) preserve the terminal similarity of sound by *without equivocation or dissimulation*.—*Whedon*. Without hypocrisy—I would understand by it *free from all ambiguity and simulation*.—*Alford*.

18. The fruit of righteousness—*Fruit* consisting in *righteousness*, not *fruit* produced by *righteousness*. By *fruit* is meant the harvest, crop, or product; and this is virtually *sown in the seed* that produces it.—*Whedon*. **Is sown in peace**—The farmer sows his seed in peace. The fields are not sown amid the tumults of a mob, or the excitements of a battle or a camp. So it is in sowing the "seed of the kingdom," in preparing for the great harvest of righteousness in the world. It is done by men of peace; it is done in peaceful scenes, and with a peaceful spirit; it is not in the tumult of war, or amid the hoarse brawling of a mob.—*Barnes*. **Of them** [Rev. Ver., *To them*] **that make peace**—"Peace-makers," not merely they who reconcile others, but who *work peace*. "Cultivate peace."—*Estius*.

Let every one of God's ministers be ambitious of that praise which Gregory Nazianzen gives to Athanasius, namely, to be an *adamant* to them that strike, and a *loadstone* to them that dissent from him—the one not to be removed with wrong, the other to draw those hearts who disagree.—*Bp. Hall*.

Authorities to be Consulted.

See references to Farrar and Schaff on Lesson II. John Wesley's Sermons. H. Bushnell, (Christ and his Salvation, p. 161.) F. W. Robertson, sermon on "The Tongue." Sermons, by

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and good fruits, without<sup>13</sup> variance, 18 without hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace<sup>14</sup> for them that make peace.

<sup>13</sup> Or, *duality*, Or, *partiality*.—<sup>14</sup> Or, *by*.

Barrow, Lardner, Difficulty of Governing the Tongue; Archbishop Whately, (Bampton Lectures;) W. Arnot, in Roots and Fruits of the Christian Life; H. Blair, Gentleness; Archbishop Leighton, Heavenly Wisdom; R. South, On Envy; Preacher's Lantern, iv, 378; ii, 721. Foster's Cyclopædia, [numbers marked with a star refer to poetical illustrations,] ver. 2: 5379, 7860; 3: 5741, 12006; 5: 5778; 6: 72760; 7: 12011; 9: 12009; 10: 12008; 12: 9213; 13: 1058; 16: \*1165.

Practical Thoughts.

[THE POWER OF THE TONGUE.]

1. The tongue has power to increase greatly the degree of our responsibility. Ver. 1.
2. The tongue measures our consecration to God and our control over self. Ver. 2.
3. The tongue has power, both for good and evil over the entire character. Vers. 3-5.
4. The evil tongue defiles the whole nature, and is itself inspired by the powers of evil. Ver. 6.
5. The evil tongue cannot be transformed by any power less than divine. Ver. 8.
6. The tongue shows true wisdom when its utterances are marked by meekness. Ver. 13.
7. The tongue will show the heavenly wisdom when it is both pure and peaceable. Ver. 17.

Sermon Outline.

The slave Æsop was commanded by his master to prepare a banquet consisting of "the best things in the world." To his surprise, the master found only *tongues* upon the table, whereupon Æsop showed him that in all the world there was nothing with greater power for good than the tongue. The slave was then ordered to present on the morrow a dinner of the worst things in the world, and, again, only tongues were on the table; and Æsop showed that the earth had no greater evil than the tongue. Our lesson shows—

I. Certain facts concerning the tongue.

II. Certain laws for the tongue.

1. Our lesson presents certain facts concerning the tongue.
  1. The fact that we are responsible for the use of the tongue. Verse 1. The silent man has less to account for than the speaker. As we see the power of the orator over his audience, do we wonder at the warning of the apostle, that those who undertake to instruct others have a greater measure of accountability before God?

2. *The fact that the tongue is an index of character.* Verse 2. He that can avoid offending in word is the perfect man; for if he controls his tongue he can control every other element of his nature; and the use of his tongue reveals his inner nature. An oath is a small thing, apparently, but it will show the power to which its utterer pays allegiance; like an estate in Scotland which pays a quarterly rental of three grains of corn, just to show who is its owner.

3. *The fact that the tongue has a mighty influence.* Verses 3-6. It is compared to the bit, guiding the horse; to the helm, directing the ship; to the fire, burning the forest—all small, yet influential. The tongue of the orator, like Pitt, has marshaled armies; of a statesman, like Webster, has shaped the destinies of states; of a slanderer, has ruined a reputation; of the Christian teacher, has guided souls to eternal life.

4. *The fact that the tongue cannot be transformed by any human power.* Verses 7-12. Every kind of wild beast is tamed, except the tongue. Socrates, when asked what beast is most dangerous to man, answered, "Of wild beasts, the slanderer; of tame beasts, the flatterer!" Man has no power to change the nature of his tongue; but God can work the transformation.

**II. Laws for the tongue.**

1. *The law of meekness.* The tongue should be controlled by the spirit of gentleness, for therein is true wisdom. Verse 13.

2. *The law of spirituality.* Verse 15. The aims of the tongue should be to express the thought of heaven, and not that of earth.

3. *The law of purity.* Verse 17. "First pure." Out of the pure heart will flow a pure utterance.

4. *The law of sincerity.* Verse 17. Above all else, let the tongue be honest, "without hypocrisy."

A. D. 50.]

LESSON IV.

[Jan. 27.

LIVING AS IN GOD'S SIGHT.—James 4. 7-17.

**GOLDEN TEXT.**—Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up.—JAMES 3. 10.

TIME, PLACE, ETC.—A. D. 50. See Lesson I.

INTRODUCTION.—The object of the command here, and in the succeeding injunctions to particular duties, is to show them how they might obtain the grace which God is willing to bestow, and how they might overcome the evils against which the apostles had been endeavoring to guard them. The true method of doing this is by submitting ourselves *in all things* to God.—*Barnes*.

Authorized Version.

7 Submit yourselves therefore to God.  
1 Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

8 Draw 2 nigh to God, and he will

<sup>1</sup> Eph. 4. 27; 1 Peter 5. 9.—<sup>2</sup> 2 Chron. 15. 2.

7. **Submit yourselves**—The previous verse supplies the connection. Because God gives grace to the humble and resists the proud, **therefore** we should seek entire submission to the will of God. The same antithesis as that in verse 4 is carried through the paragraph. It is between the *proud* and the *humble*, between *God*, to be submitted and approached, and the *devil*, to be resisted; between *cleanse* and *sinners*, between *purify* and *double-minded*, between *laughter* and *mourning*, and, finally, between penitent *humiliation* and a divine *exaltation*.—*Whedon*. There is a *threefold submission* to God: of our *carnal hearts* to his holiness; of our *proud hearts* to his mercy; and of our *revolting hearts* to his sovereignty; and all this that we may be pure, humble, and obedient.—*Manton*. **Resist the devil**—While you yield to God in all things, you are to yield to the devil in none. You are to resist and oppose him in whatever way he may approach you, whether by allure-

Revised Version.

7 Be subject therefore unto God; but resist the devil, and he will flee from 8 you. Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your

ments, by flattering promises, by the fascinations of the world, by temptation, or by threats. See 1 Pet. 5. 9. No one is safe who yields in the least to the suggestions of the tempter; there is no one who is *not* safe if he does not yield. A man, for example, is always safe from intemperance if he *resists* all allurements to indulgence in strong drink and never yields in the slightest degree; no one is certainly safe if he drinks even moderately.—*Barnes*. **He will flee from you**—Temptations repelled disappear, and when habitually kept at a distance cease to exist. The firmly formed habit of virtue comparatively places the soul out of the normal reach of temptation.—*Whedon*. Only resist, only show your face as conscious of your divine origin, only adore God, and Satan, powerless and abashed, will flee from you. There is *no real* connection between us and Satan.—*A. Saphir*.

8. **Draw nigh**—The reverse of *resist*. The former should be done *to God*, the latter to *the*

## Authorized Version.

draw nigh to you. Cleanse *your* hands, ye sinners; and purify *your* hearts, ye double-minded.

9 Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: let your laughter be turned to mourning, and *your* joy to heaviness.

10 Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up.

*devil*—the two sides of the great battle for possession of the human soul.—*Whedon*. We cannot come *literally* any nearer to God than we always are, for he is always round about us, but we may come nearer in a spiritual sense. We may address him directly in prayer; we may approach him by meditation on his character; we may draw near to him in the ordinances of religion.—*Barnes*. He will draw nigh to you—He himself, although he may use various channels and instruments—it may be affliction or prosperity; it may be through the voice of Nature or of Providence; it may be through the word or the example of a Christian—yet it is God himself. But, of all instruments and channels, the written word is of the utmost importance; it stands supreme. It is through Scripture, eminently, that God draws nigh to the soul.

—*A. Saphir*. Cleanse *your* hands—The hands being the external organs of action, and becoming polluted by the act, as, *e. g.*, by blood in the act of murder (see Isa. 1. 15; 59. 3; 1 Tim. 2. 8).—*Alford*. The *sinner* is the actual transgressor; his *hands* are stained with blood or other blot of sin; he must *cleanse* by reformation that he may spread clean *hands* in prayer to God.—*Whedon*. Purify *your* hearts—The *heart* is the seat of motives and intentions—that by which we devise any thing; the *hands*, the instruments by which we execute our purposes. Do not rest satisfied with a mere external reformation; with putting away your outward transgressions. There must be a deeper work than that, a work which shall reach to the heart, and which shall purify the affections.—*Barnes*. Ye double-minded—Ye whose affections are divided between God and the world. The apostle is addressing not two classes of persons, but one and the same: the *sinners* are *double-minded*.—*Alford*.

9. Be afflicted—The double-minded and sinners are still addressed. They have been exhorted to purify their hearts. But this cannot be done without *true and earnest repentance*, leading them through *deep sorrow*. They must realize their condition and be penitent in view of it. The sins to which the apostle refers are

## Revised Version.

hands, ye sinners; and purify your

9 hearts, ye doubleminded. Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness.

10 Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall exalt you.

those which he had specified in the previous part of the chapter, and which he had spoken of as so evil in their nature, and so dangerous in their tendency. **Your laughter**—It is often the case that those for whom the deep sorrows of repentance would be peculiarly appropriate give themselves to mirth and vanity.—*Barnes*. **Turned to mourning**—He means that it is a good exchange to put away carnal joy for godly sorrow, for then we have *that* in the duty which we expected in the sin, and in a more pure, full, and sweet way. When the world repents of its joy, the Christian will never repent of his sorrow.—*Manton*. We are to remember that these exhortations are not to Christians in the enjoyment of salvation, but to sinners and those vacillating between the world and the Church.

10. Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord—Be willing to take your appropriate place in the dust on account of your transgressions. This is to be “in the sight of the Lord,” or before him. Our sins have been committed against him, and their principal aggravation, whoever may have been wronged by them and great as is their criminality in other respects, arises from that consideration.—*Barnes*. **He shall lift you up**—He will exalt you from the condition of a broken-hearted penitent to that of a forgiven child; will wipe away your tears, remove the sadness of your heart, fill you with joy, and clothe you with the garments of salvation.—*Barnes*.

No humility is perfect and proportioned but that which makes us hate ourselves as corrupt, but respect ourselves as immortal—the humility that kneels in the dust, but gazes on the skies.—*W. A. Butler*.

Seek humility, and thou wilt find it, and when thou hast found it thou wilt love it, and by God's grace wilt not part with it; with it thou canst not perish.—*Dr. Pusey*.

Bring into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ. Order thy life according to the life of Jesus, after Jesus hath put his life within thee. Humble thyself, so shalt thou be exalted. Be poor, so shalt thou be rich. Have nothing, so thou canst receive all things.—*A. Caspers*.

## Authorized Version.

11 Speak not evil one of another, brethren. He that speaketh evil of *his* brother, and judgeth his brother, speaketh evil of the law, and judgeth the law; but if thou judge the law, thou art not a doer of the law, but a judge.

12 There is one lawgiver,<sup>2</sup> who is able to save and to destroy: who art thou that judgest another?

13 Go to now, ye that say, To-day or

<sup>2</sup> Matt. 10. 28.

11. **Speak not evil**—The evil here referred to is that of *talking against* others—against their actions, their motives, their manner of living, their families, etc. Few things are more common in the world, nothing is more decidedly against the true spirit of religion.—*Barnes*. This does not forbid just criticism, but it does forbid a reckless overbearing toward one whom we have reason to believe conscientious in which our own pride of decision is involved.—*Whedon*. **Brethren**—It did not need this tender word to show us that a different class is now addressed from the *sinners* of the last terrible paragraph.—*Whedon*. **Of his brother**—One who, it may be assumed, tries to be, and believes he is, right. **Speaketh evil of the law** [Rev. Ver., *Speaketh against the law*.]—The law here referred to is probably the law of Christ, or the rule which all Christians profess to obey. It is that which James elsewhere calls the “law of liberty;” the law which released men from the servitude of the Jewish rites, and gave them liberty to worship God without restraint and bondage, (Acts 15. 10; Gal. 4. 21-31,) implied in that ancient system of worship, and the law by which it was contemplated that they should be free from sin.—*Barnes*. **Judgeth the law**—Decides upon the exact nature and force of the law, and its absolute bearing on the particular case of the brother. We may have our opinion, and the brother may have his; what is condemned is our overriding his judgment, as if he were a culprit who had no right to an opinion.—*Whedon*. **Not a doer of the law**—Our business in religion is not to make laws, or to declare what they should have been, or to amend those that are made; it is simply to *obey* those which are appointed, and to allow others to do the same, as they understand them.—*Barnes*.

12. **There is but one lawgiver**—The Lord Jesus Christ, the Founder of the Church, is its only authoritative legislator. No man, no body of men, has a right to add to the laws which he

## Revised Version.

11 Speak not one against another, brethren. He that speaketh against a brother, or judgeth his brother, speaketh against the law, and judgeth the law; but if thou judgest the law, thou art not a doer of the law,

12 but a judge. One *only* is the lawgiver and judge, *even* he who is able to save and to destroy: but who art thou that judgest thy neighbor?

13 Go to now, ye that say, To-day or

has laid down. The Rev. Ver. here reads, “One *only* is the lawgiver and judge, *even* he who is able to save and to destroy.” **Who is able to save and to destroy**—It may mean that he is intrusted with all power, and is abundantly able to administer his government: to restrain where it is necessary to restrain; to save where it is proper to save; to punish where it is just to punish. The whole matter pertaining to *judgment*, therefore, may be safely left in his hands, and, as he is abundantly qualified for it, we should not usurp his prerogatives.—*Barnes*. In *spiritual things*, none else but the Lord can give laws to the conscience; in external policy the laws and edicts of men are to be observed. But here the apostle speaks of the internal government of the conscience where God alone judges, since God alone can give laws to the conscience.—*J. G. Butler*. **Who art thou**—The tendency every-where has been to enact *other* laws than those appointed by Christ—the laws of synods and councils—and to claim that Christians are bound to observe them, and should be punished if they do not.—*Barnes*. **That judgest another**—There are *three* things exempted from man’s judiciary: God’s *counsels*, the *Holy Scriptures*, and the *hearts of men*.—*J. G. Butler*.

13. **Go to now**—Bengel calls this an exclamation to excite attention. This seems to be the true view of it: “Come on,” let us reason together; as in Isa. 1. 18.—*Alford*. **Ye that say**—Having before spoken against those that contemned the law, he now speaks against those that contemned Providence; promising themselves a long time in the world, and a happy accomplishment of their worldly projects, without any sense or thought of *their own frailty*, or the *sudden strokes of God*.—*Manton*. **To-day or to-morrow**—The number of precise particulars, *to-morrow, such a city, a year, buy, sell, get gain*, presumes upon many contingent points in which there is probability of failure, especially the clos-



## Authorized Version.

to-morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain:

14 Whereas ye know not what *shall be* on the morrow. For what *is* your life? *It is* even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.

15 For that ye *ought* to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that.

16 But now ye rejoice in your boastings: all such rejoicing is evil.

17 Therefore *to* him that knoweth to do good, and doeth *it* not, to him *it* is sin.

• Or, For it is.—<sup>4</sup> Luke 12, 47; John 9, 41; 15, 22; Rom. 1, 20; 2, 17.

ing one, which is the real aim of all the rest.—*Whedon.* We will go—The great Lord of all has no part in this scheme. These little arrogant words, *we will*, thrust him out at once, and occupy his place.—*R. Walker.* Continue there a year—More accurately, *Spend a year there*, [as in Rev. Ver.] Which savors of presumption much more strongly and vividly. They speak, as Bengel says, as if intending afterward to settle about the following years.—*Alford.* Buy and sell—It is not improbable that there is an allusion here to the commercial habits of the Jews at the time when the apostle wrote. Many of them were engaged in foreign traffic, and for this purpose made long journeys to distant trading cities as Alexandria, Antioch, Ephesus, Corinth, etc.—*Bloomfield.*

14. Ye know not what shall be—A sentence so true that men utterly forget it. Not a man in all the world knows of a single certainty concerning his own future, except that at some time he must die. Yet men are planning as if expecting to live forever. *It is even a vapor* Rev. Ver., *Ye are a vapor.*—A preferred reading is, *ye are*. It is not our *life*, but even *ourselves*, that is an appearing and then vanishing vapor or mist.—*Whedon.* A mist, an exhalation, a smoke; such a vapor as we see ascending from a stream, or as lies on the mountain side in the morning, or as floats for a little in the air, but which is dissipated by the rising sun, leaving not a trace behind.—*Barnes.* Vanisheth away—The works of art that man has made, the house that he has built, or the book that he has written, remain for a little time, but *the life* has gone. There is nothing of it remaining—any more than there is of the vapor

## Revised Version.

to-morrow we will go into this city, and spend a year there, and trade,

14 and get gain: whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. What is your life? For ye are a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and

15 then vanisheth away. <sup>1</sup>For that ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall both live, and do this or that.

16 But now ye glory in your vauntings:

17 all such glorying is evil. To him therefore that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin.

*We, Instead of your saying.*

which in the morning climbed silently up the mountain side.—*Barnes.*

15, 16. Ye ought to say, If the Lord will—The apostle does not mean that these words should always be used by us when we speak of our purposes respecting futurity; but that on such occasions the sentiment which these words express should always be present to our mind.—*Macknight.* Ye rejoice in your boastings—

The word signifies the self-deceived and groundless confidence in the stability of life and health on which the worldly pride themselves. On this, as on its foundation, your boastful speeches are built.—*Alford.* You form your plans for the future as if with consummate wisdom, and are confident of success. You do not anticipate a failure; you do not see how plans so skillfully formed *can* fail. You form them as if you were certain that you would live; as if secure from the numberless casualties which may defeat your schemes.—*Barnes.*

17. Knoweth—The apostle addresses, not Gentiles ignorant of God's providence, but Jews, who are expected to know the truth and their own duty. To do good—Rather, *to do well*, in opposition to the *evil* of the last verse. The *doing well* is the ceasing from such *boasting*, and the trusting ourselves to the divine hand. It is not the purpose of the text to condemn sins of omission.—*Whedon.* Still, the proposition will admit of a more general application. It is universally true that if a man knows what is right, and does not do it, he is guilty of sin. If he understands what his duty is; if he has the means of doing good to others; if by his name, his influence, his wealth, he can promote a good cause; if he can, consistently with other duties,

relieve the distressed, the poor, the prisoner, the oppressed; if he can send the Gospel to other lands, or can wipe away the tear of the mourner; if he has talents by which he can lift a voice that shall be heard in favor of temperance, chastity, liberty, and religion, he is under obligations to do it; and if, by indolence, or avarice, or selfishness, or the dread of the loss of popularity, he does not do it, he is guilty of sin before God.—*Barnes*. To him it is sin—Sins of knowledge are most dangerous. They are more sins than others, as having more malice and contempt in them: contempt both of the law of God and his kindness. Sins against knowledge have more of God's vengeance upon them.—*Manton*.

For a Jew to talk thus, as if there were no God, or as though he took no part in the concerns of life, was to run counter to the central thought of their whole dispensation. A sense of God's nearness was the one thing which, more than all others, separated the Jews from other races as a chosen people. To abnegate this conviction in common talk was to show a practical apostasy. The Rabbins also felt this. In *Deborin Rabba*, § 9, a father, at his son's circumcision, produces wine seven years old, and says: "With this wine will I continue for a long time to celebrate the birth of my new-born son." That night Rabbi Simeon meets the Angel of Death, and asks him "Why he is wandering about." "Because," said Asrael, "I stay those who say, We will do this or that, and think not how soon death may overtake them. The man who said he would drink that wine often shall die in thirty days."—*Farrar*.

**Authorities to be Consulted.**

See Schaff and Farrar, in Lesson II, and also in the following: Steins and Twigs, i, 140 Homiletical Monthly, iii, 327. Pulpit Analyst, 1, 155. Guthrie's Sunday Magazine, 1, 229. Sermons by T. Chalmers, The Guilt of Calumny; Dr. Barrow, Against Detraction; Sydney Smith, On Slander; R. Hall, Humility before God; Bishop Hall, Drawing Nigh to God; Bishop Sumbridge, On Double-mindedness; C. G. Finney, True Submission; Archbishop Trench, Resisting the Devil; J. C. Hare, Draw Nigh to God. Foster's Cyclopedia of Illustrations, [numbers marked with a star refer to poetical illustrations,] ver. 7. 2522, 11930; 8: \*519, 9403; 9: 5114; \*2890, 4153; 14: 4711, 10269; 15: 9069, 10999; 16: 6870; 17: \*947, 3504.

**Practical Thoughts.**

[THE LIFE OF FAITH.]

1. The life of faith requires submission to the will of God. Ver. 7.
2. The life of faith requires separation from all that is opposed to God. Ver. 7.

3. The life of faith has the promise of victory over the arts and attacks of Satan. Ver. 7.

4. The life of faith brings men nigh to God, and God nigh to them. Ver. 8.

5. The life of faith demands purity of life and singleness of heart. Ver. 8.

6. The life of faith requires charitableness in judgments concerning our fellow-men. Ver. 11.

7. The life of faith requires a self-renouncing trust in God. Vers. 14-16.

8. The life of faith requires not only knowledge of the right, but doing it.

**Sermon Outline.**

BY REV. D. S. MONROE, D.D.

The life of St. James was itself a beautiful illustration of this text. Though closely related to the Saviour, and called upon to occupy some of the most responsible positions in the early Church, there is not the slightest allusion in his epistle to these great honors, nor the least assumption of superiority. How rare are such instances! How frequently men elevated to places of power look down upon those by whom they have been favored, and treat as menials their masters!

**I. Humility is requisite to Christian Discipleship.**—Said our Saviour, "Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and come after me." These are the three steps to every true life. As *this* humility must be in the "sight of the Lord," it must be sincere.

1. *Humility is not humiliation*—As Christian discipleship conforms us to the spirit and life of Christ, there can be nothing humiliating connected with it. That spirit is beautiful, noble, true, and holy.

2. *Humility gives us correct views of ourselves.*—This is essential to genuine Christian life. How difficult it is to know oneself! Said Hazeal, "Is thy servant a dog that he should do this great thing?" and yet on the morrow he slew his master.

3. *Humility will fit us the better for true Christian work.*—It is while engaged in works of usefulness among the lowly, the dependent, and the sorrowful, that the highest elements of character are acquired; so that while serving others we thought at first our inferiors, we are ourselves strengthened to bear the trials and to meet the demands of discipleship. The moment a man becomes wholly Christ's his exclusiveness vanishes.

**II. Humility is requisite to honorable distinction.**—A Greek philosopher having been asked, "What is Jupiter doing?" replied, "Exalting the lowly and abasing the lofty." In that beautiful parable of the Pharisee and the Publican our Saviour declared, "as the fundamental law of the kingdom of God," "Every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted."

1. *An honorable ambition is commendable.*—Christianity does not require the surrender of either

[Continued on page 309.]

A. D. 51.]

## LESSON V.

[Feb. 3.

PAUL'S SECOND MISSIONARY JOURNEY.—Acts 15. 35-41; 16. 1-10.

GOLDEN TEXT.—Come over into Macedonia, and help us.—ACTS 16. 9.

TIME.—A. D. 51. For rulers, see Lesson I.

PLACES.—Antioch, in Syria; Lystra, in Lyeaonia; Troas, in Mysia. See Descriptive Index.

CONNECTING LINKS.—(1) The report of Paul and Barnabas. Acts 14. 12. (2) The address of James. Acts 14. 13-21. (3) The letter to the Churches. Acts 14. 22-29. (4) The return to Antioch. Acts 14. 30-34. (5) Peter's visit to Antioch, and his rebuke by Paul. Gal. 2. 11-14.

INTRODUCTION.—Paul now, with a companionship ready to second his own heroic spirit, starting from *Antioch*, revisits his four posts of Christianity in Asia Minor, and then for awhile pauses, soon to plume himself for a bolder flight. He starts forth thence, Spirit-guided, and finds his way to the Hellespont, dividing the continents, and crosses over into Europe. He plants the first known Church in Europe. *Philippi*, in *Macedonia*, enjoys that imperishable precedence. Thence, cutting through southern Greece, he visits *Athens*, the home of ancient classic genius, and *Corinth*, the abode of the most voluptuous Grecian refinement. Thence returning, passing through Ephesus, he rallies back to the center whence he took his first commission, and his second starting-point, *Antioch*. Chap. 18. 22.—*D. D. Wheldon*.

## Authorized Version.

35 Paul <sup>1</sup>also and Bar'na-bas continued in An'ti-och, teaching and preaching the word of the Lord, with many others also.

36 And some days after, Paul said unto Bar'na-bas, Let us go again and visit our brethren <sup>2</sup>in every city where we have preached the word of the Lord, and see how they do.

<sup>1</sup>Chap. 13. 1.—<sup>2</sup>Chap. 14. 1.

35. Paul also and Barnabas—Having returned from the conference at Jerusalem named in Lesson I. Continued—There is nothing to indicate how long, but the time must have been short, from the next verse. Perhaps (?) during this time took place that visit of Peter to Antioch mentioned Gal. 2. 11, *ff.*, when he sacrificed his Christian consistency and better persuasions to please some Judaizers; and even Barnabas was led away with the dissimulation. On this occasion Paul boldly rebuked him.—*Alford*. Antioch—If the map be consulted it will be seen that Antioch is situated nearly in the angle where the coast-line of Cilicia, running eastward, and that of Palestine, extending northward, are brought to an abrupt meeting. By its harbor of Seleucia Antioch was in communication with all the trade of the Mediterranean; and through the open country behind the Lebanon it could be conveniently approached by the caravans of Mesopotamia and Arabia. There was, in fact, every thing in the situation and circumstances of the city to render it a place of most miscellaneous concourse; and in the time of the apostles it was an Oriental Rome, in which all the forms

## Revised Version.

35 But Paul and Bar'na-bas tarried in An'ti-och, teaching and preaching the word of the Lord, with many others also.

36 And after some days Paul said unto Bar'na-bas, Let us return now and visit the brethren in every city wherein we proclaimed the word of the Lord, and see how they fare.

of civilized life in the empire found some representative.—*Kittó*. Teaching and preaching—Teaching the Christian disciples; preaching, as heralds, the Gospel to those that knew it not. This is the twofold function of the ministry.—*L. Abbott*. With many others—Among these we may fairly reckon the prophets of chap. 13. 1. Looking to the later history of the Church of Antioch, it is not improbable that we may think also of the martyr Ignatius, and Euodius, afterward Bishop of Antioch, as among those who were thus active, though they were not prominent enough, when Luke wrote, to be specially named.—*E. H. Plumptre*.

36. Visit our brethren—*Paul* had no further thought in starting out than to visit the Churches already established in the field previously visited by Barnabas and himself. From place to place, and definitely from Asia to Europe, he was led by the Holy Spirit; and, as he was directed, he went.—*J. G. Butler*. Where we have preached—In Cyprus, Pamphylia, Pisidia, and Lyeaonia, during the first missionary tour. How they do—We may well believe that it was a desire to know, not only the gen-

## Authorized Version.

37 And Bar'na-bas determined to take with them <sup>3</sup>John, whose surname was Mark.

38 But Paul thought not good to take him with them, <sup>4</sup>who departed from them from Pam-phyli'a, and went not with them to the work.

39 And the contention was so sharp between them, that they departed asunder one from the other: and so Bar'na-bas took Mark, and sailed unto Cy'prus;

<sup>3</sup> Chap. 12. 12; 13. 5; Col. 4. 10; 2 Tim. 4. 11; Philem. 24.—  
<sup>4</sup> Chap. 13. 13.

eral condition of the Churches, but the spiritual growth of each individual member.—*Plumptre.*

Having been in winter quarters long enough, he is for taking the field again, and making another campaign, in a vigorous prosecution of this holy war against Satan's kingdom.—*M. Henry.*

37. Barnabas determined [Rev. Ver., *was minded*] to take with them—Barnabas, who had just before himself yielded to Peter's wrong example, could more readily overlook Mark's weakness. His love, too, to his young kinsman, who had now returned from Jerusalem ready for toil, and his strong desire to have Mark permanently engaged in Christian work, joined possibly with some remaining vigor of the *old nature*, led him to persist to the point of entire separation from Paul.—*J. G. Butler.* **John, whose surname was Mark**—He was the son of Mary of Jerusalem, the sister of Barnabas, at whose house the prayer-meeting was held while Peter was in prison, (Acts 12. 12,) and accompanied Barnabas and Paul on the first journey; but abandoned them at Cyprus. Afterward he regained the favor of Paul, and received his commendation in 2 Tim. 4. 11. He was the author of the second gospel.

38. Paul thought not good—The form of this verse, as literally rendered from the Greek, is: *But Paul thought proper, (as to) one who had fallen off from them from Pamphylia, and had not gone with them to the work, not to take with them that man.* We may well believe that Paul's own mouth gave originally the character to the sentence.—*Alford.* The term designates a moral judgment: He does not deserve that we should take him with us; he has made himself unworthy of it.—*Lechler.* **Departed from them** [Rev. Ver., *Withdrew from them*].—Mark's fault is *unreliability*, desertion from the post where he was invited and needed.—*D. D. Whedon.* **At Pamphylia**—On the southern shore of Asia Minor. See Acts 13. 13. **Went not with them**

## Revised Version.

37 And Bar'na-bas was minded to take with them John also, who was called

38 Mark. But Paul thought not good to take with them him who withdrew from them from Pam-phyli'a, and went not with them to the work.

39 And there arose a sharp contention, so that they parted asunder one from the other, and Bar'na-bas took Mark with him, and sailed away unto

—There was a "severe earnestness" about Paul, a sort of intense whole-heartedness, which could make no allowance whatever for one who, at the very point at which dangers began to thicken, deserted a great and sacred work.—*Farrar.* Paul sought justice, Barnabas courtesy.—*Chryostom.*

39. And the contention was so sharp [Rev. Ver., *There arose a sharp contention*].—The original indicates bitterness in the controversy, and implies blame on both sides.—*L. Abbott.* Excess of sharpness was perhaps the only thing really wrong. They acted respectively according to their several gifts.—*W. Jacobson.* The sum total of the facts, as he states them, combined with facts elsewhere learned, produce the impression that Barnabas acted from personal affection to a relative; Paul from a regard to the apparent right and the good of the enterprise. He takes his nephew and flies off the track, leaving Paul to select a new colleague, instead of Barnabas, in Silas, a new minister, instead of Mark and Timothy. He goes unblest of the Church, even his own Antioch, leaving Paul and his chosen to receive its commendation to the grace of God.—*D. D. Whedon.* [With regard to the "commendation," see note on the next verse.] **They departed** [Rev. Ver., *parted*] **asunder**—We cannot, however, suppose that Paul and Barnabas parted like enemies, in anger and hatred. It is very likely that they made a deliberate and amicable arrangement to divide the region of their first mission between them, Paul taking the continental, and Barnabas the insular, part of the proposed visitation. Of this, at least, we are certain, that the quarrel was overruled by divine Providence to a good result. One stream of missionary labor had been divided, and the regions blessed by the waters of life were proportionally multiplied.—*Lechler.* **Barnabas took Mark**—An abruptness of leaving indicating passion. He loses the honor of bearing the banner of the cross with Paul into Europe.

## Authorized Version.

40 And Paul chose Silas, and departed, being recommended by the brethren unto the grace of God.

41 And he went through Syr'i-a and Ci-li'ci-a, confirming the churches.

1 Then came he to <sup>2</sup>Der'be and Lys'

8 Chap. 14, 9.

Barnabas henceforth disappears from all authentic history, being mentioned by Paul alone, 1 Cor. 9. 6. As it was to his native Cyprus he went with his young relative, in Cyprus he seems to have remained. Very possibly the quietude of approaching age had some influence in separating him from the young and too active Paul. Legends alone pretend to relate his subsequent life and his martyrdom in Cyprus. An epistle early as the second century bears his name, but is neither worthy of his fame nor accepted as indisputably genuine by the early Church.—*D. D. Whedon.* Mark, who is afterward found walking in the right way, (Col. 4. 10,) may have, on the one hand, been deeply humbled by the rigor of Paul, and on the other comforted and encouraged by the indulgent love of Barnabas. The one was as necessary to him as the other.—*Weyer.* Sailed into Cyprus—The island in the north-east corner of the Mediterranean from which Barnabas had originally come. Acts 4. 36. While we have no record of the labors of Barnabas and Mark in Cyprus, (as we have none of the many other laborers—apostles and disciples,) the ultimate marked success of the Gospel in Cyprus may justly be attributed, in great part, to their faithful and efficient ministry.—*J. G. Butler.*

We must own it was their infirmity, and is recorded for our admonition; not that we must make use of it to excuse our own intemperate heats and passions, or to rebate the edge of our sorrow and shame for them; we must not say, What if I was in a passion, were not Paul and Barnabas so? No; but it must check our censures of others, and moderate them.—*M. Henry.*

Nothing should alienate us from one another but that which alienates us from God.—*Dr. Whicohoc.*

40. Paul chose Silas—Silas was in every respect qualified to be the companion of Paul. He was one of the deputies sent from Jerusalem to Antioch; he was highly esteemed by the apostles, and he could from personal knowledge testify to the agreement in doctrine between Paul and the original apostles, being himself present at the Council of Jerusalem.—*Gloag.* Being recommended by the brethren—This obvi-

## Revised Version.

40 Cy'prus; but Paul chose Silas, and went forth, being commended by the brethren to the grace of the Lord.

41 And he went through Syr'i-a and Ci-li'ci-a, confirming the churches.

16 And he came also to Der'be and to

ously implied a full gathering of the Church and a special service of prayer on the departure of the two apostles. Silas, as thus sent forth by the Church, might now claim that title no less than Barnabas.—*E. H. Plumtree.* It does not follow from the historian's silence that Barnabas was not so recommended too; for this is the last mention of Barnabas in the history whose whole object now is to relate the proceedings of Paul.—*D. Brown.*

Both persisted, and both suffered. Paul went his way, and many a time, in the stormy and agitated days which followed, must he have sorely missed, amid the provoking of all men and the strife of tongues, the repose and generosity which breathed through the life and character of the Son of Exhortation. Barnabas went his way, and, dis severed from the grandeur and vehemence of Paul, passed into comparative obscurity, in which, so far from sharing the immortal gratitude which embalms the memory of his colleague, his name is never heard again except in the isolated allusions of the letters of his friend.—*Farrar.*

41. Syria and Cilicia—The Churches visited in Syria would possibly include those in and about Damascus. In the sketch of his journey which follows we have no other indications to guide us than the mountain passes and some remains of ancient Roman roads. From these indications we judge that he crossed Mt. Amanus, the natural boundary between Syria and Cilicia, by the gorge anciently called the Syrian Gate, now known as the Beilan Pass. In Cilicia, whatever other Churches he visited, he probably did not omit that which had been almost certainly established by his labors in his native city of Tarsus. Thence he must have crossed Mt. Taurus into the province of Lyeaonia, probably through the great fissure known in ancient days as the Cilician Gates, a gorge extending, from north to south, a distance of some 80 miles.—*L. Abbott.*

1. Came he—Paul is now viewed by Luke as the man, Silas as his second, and Timothy will soon be his minister, as John Mark was once invited to be.—*Whedon.* Derbe and Lystra—The site of both towns is uncertain. Lystra was undoubtedly in the eastern part of the great plain of Lyeaonia, and there are very strong reasons

## Authorized Version.

tra, and, behold, a certain disciple was there, <sup>6</sup> named Ti-mo'the-us, (the son of a certain woman, which was a Jewess, and believed, but his father was a Greek;)

2 Which <sup>7</sup> was well reported of by the brethren that were at Lys'tra and I-co'-ni-um.

3 Him would Paul have to go forth

<sup>6</sup> Chap. 19. 27; Rom. 16. 21; 1 Cor. 4. 17; Phil. 2. 19; 1 Thess. 3. 2; 1 Tim. 1. 2; 2 Tim. 1. 2. — <sup>7</sup> Chap. 6. 3; 2 Tim. 3. 15.

for identifying its site with the ruins called Binbir-Kilisseh, at the base of a conical mountain of volcanic structure, named the Karadagh. Derbe was in the eastern part of the great upland plain of Lycaonia, somewhere near the place where the pass called the Cilician Gates opened a way from the low plain of Cilicia to the tableland of the interior; and probably it was a stage upon the great road which passed this way.—*L. Abbott*. This was the soil which Paul had moistened with his blood, (chap. 14. 19;) but how abundant were those fruits of his sufferings which God afterward enabled him to witness with joy! He here finds a number of disciples, when he revisits the spot, and among them his own Timotheus—the trophies of his sufferings, the seals of his apostleship.—*Brandt*. **A certain disciple was there**—That is, at Lystra. The language of chap. 20. 4, does not imply that Timothy came from Derbe, rather the reverse. He had probably been converted at Paul's previous visit to Lystra. His mother's name was Eunice, his grandmother's name Lois, (2 Tim. 1. 5;) they were both Christians, probably having been converted at Paul's previous visit. From childhood he had been instructed in the Jewish Scriptures (2 Tim. 3. 15) at home, for there is no indication of any synagogue at Lystra. **A Jewess, and believed**—A Jewess by birth and education; a Christian believer by personal conviction.—*L. Abbott*. **His father was a Greek**—There is no indication whatever here found that the latter had embraced the Christian religion; it may, on the contrary, be inferred from the words that he was still a pagan at that time, and that he had neither become a Jewish proselyte nor been converted to Christ.—*Lechler*.

Dr. Spencer tells us that out of the two hundred and thirty-five hopeful converts in his church one hundred and thirty-eight were under twenty years, only four had passed their fiftieth year. I have been permitted during my ministry to receive nearly one thousand persons into the Church on

## Revised Version.

Lys'tra: and behold, a certain disciple was there, named Tim'o-thy, the son of a Jew'ess which believed; but

- 2 his father was a Greek. The same was well reported of by the brethren that were at Lys'tra and I-co'ni-um.  
3 Him would Paul have to go forth with

confession of their faith, and not one dozen of these had outgrown their fiftieth year. I did, indeed, once baptize a veteran of eighty-five, but the case was so remarkable that it excited the talk and wonder of the town. Such late repentances are too much like what the blunt dying soldier called "flinging the fag-end of one's life into the face of the Almighty.—*T. L. Cuyler*.

2. **Well reported**—Some of these testimonies were probably intimations of the Spirit respecting his fitness for the work, for Paul speaks (1 Tim. 1. 18) of "the prophecies which went before on thee." See chap. 13. 1, 3. He was set apart for the work by the laying on of the hands of Paul and of the presbytery, (1 Tim. 4. 14; 2 Tim. 1. 6,) after he had made a good confession before many witnesses. 1 Tim. 6. 12.—*Alford*. Paul himself observeth the like manner of choice, as he prescribes elsewhere to be observed in the appointment of ministers.—*Calvin*. The two epistles written by Paul to Timothy contain indications of his character; he was not robust, (1 Tim. 5. 23,) naturally shrank from opposition and responsibility, (1 Tim. 4. 12-16; 5. 20; 6. 11-14; 2 Tim. 2. 1-7,) was tender and sensitive, (2 Tim. 1. 4,) and devout and earnestly consecrated to the service of God—this last being indicated by his abandonment of his home to accompany the apostle and by his submission to the rite of circumcision.—*L. Abbott*. **The brethren**—Showing that the earlier work of Paul had not been in vain. There were organized Churches, having relations of brotherhood with each other, and recognizing the unity of the Gospel. **Iconium** was between ten and twenty miles from Lystra.

3. **Him would Paul have**—To accompany himself as attendant and courier in place of the rejected Mark. His double connection with the Jews by the mother's side, and with the Gentiles by the father's, would strike the apostle as a peculiar qualification for his own sphere of labor.—*D. Brown*. So far as appears, Timothy is the first Gentile who, after his conversion, comes

## Authorized Version.

with him; and <sup>8</sup>took and circumcised him because of the Jews which were in those quarters; for they knew all that his father was a Greek.

4 And as they went through the cities they delivered them the decrees for to keep, that <sup>9</sup>were ordained of the apostles and elders which were at Je-ru'-sa-lem.

5 And <sup>10</sup>so were the churches established in the faith, and increased in number daily.

6 Now when they had gone through-

\* 1 Cor. 9. 20; Gal. 2. 3; 5. 2.—<sup>9</sup> Chap. 15. 28.—<sup>10</sup> Chap. 15. 41; Col. 1. 23, 2. 2; Jude 24, 25.

before us as a regular missionary, for what is said of Titus (Gal. 2. 3) refers to a later period.—*Wiesinger*. **Circumcised him**—Paul had two sufficient reasons for circumcising Timothy before inducting him into the ministry: the chief one was that as an *uncircumcised Jew* Timothy could not be admitted into the synagogues nor listened to with respect by the unconverted Jews. Besides this positive necessity, no principle was compromised in the case of Timothy. Further, Paul was willing to avail himself of this opportunity (as he did of one other, Act 21) practically to correct certain misrepresentations that his enemies had made against him—the same that had been made against the Master—that he had despised and blasphemed the law of Moses. And it is to be noted that Paul's refusal to circumcise Titus while at Jerusalem (Gal. 2. 3-5) was perfectly consistent with his action here; for Titus was a Greek, a heathen born, with no claim to the Jewish rite or privilege. Those who demanded his circumcision did it upon the express grounds that the Gentiles must become Jews before they could become Christians, that the burden of ceremonials must be assumed, and especially circumcision, as an essential condition of salvation.—*J. G. Butler*. **Because of the Jews**—Not from fear of them, but in order not to prevent his own usefulness among them, when, by conceding a point where no principle was at stake, he could gain their favor.

4. As they went through the cities—Iconium, and perhaps Antioch, in Pisidia. He might at Iconium see the elders of the Church of Antioch as he did afterward those of Ephesus at Miletus. If he went to Antioch, he might regain his route into Phrygia and Galatia by crossing the hills east of that city.—*A. Ford*. **The decrees**—The word rendered "decrees" in

## Revised Version.

him; and he took and circumcised him because of the Jews that were in those parts: for they all knew that his

4 father was a Greek. And as they went on their way through the cities, they delivered them the decrees for to keep, which had been ordained of the apostles and elders that were at 5 Je-ru'-sa-lem. So the churches were strengthened in the faith, and increased in number daily.

6 And they went through the region

classical Greek signifies, first an opinion, then a public resolution, finally an authoritative governmental decree, in which sense it is ordinarily used in the New Testament. Luke 2. 1; Acts 17. 7. Nothing more, however, is necessarily indicated here than that Paul and Silas reported to the Christian Churches the judgment or opinion of the Church at Jerusalem as embodied in their public resolution, to which, confirmed as it was by the unanimous agreement of the life-companions of their Lord, Gentile Christians would naturally yield a ready compliance. That it was not regarded by Paul as a law of permanent obligation is evident from his language subsequently to the Corinthians, 1 Cor. 8; comp. Rom. 14. 14.—*L. Abbott*. **Ordained of the apostles**—See Lesson I.

5. **And so**—*Therefore*, both because peace was secured between the Jewish and Gentile converts, and also because both were taught to rest their hopes, not upon rites and ceremonies, the righteousness that is of the law, but upon the mercy of God through Jesus Christ.—*L. Abbott*. **Established . . . and increased**—Converts already made rejoiced in the relief given by the determinations of the council; and Gentiles would no longer be deterred by apprehension of having to take upon themselves the yoke of the Mosaic Law.—*W. Jacobson*. A rare increase—in numbers and, at the same time, in the measure of faith.—*Engel*.

6. **Had gone throughout**—Our historian here passes hastily, and with large omissions, over an extensive ground of work and travel. The reason, we think, is, *first*, that Luke believed he had given a sufficient specimen of the Asiatic work in the former missionary tour; and, *second*, narrating, as we have maintained, the Gentilizing of the Church down to its establishment in Rome, he recognizes the need of brevity in the eastern

## Authorized Version.

out Phryg'i-a and the region of Ga-la'ti-a, and were forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach the word in A'si-a,

7 After they were come to My'si-a they assayed to go into Bi-thyn'i-a; but the Spirit suffered them not.

8 And they passing by My'si-a came down to Tro'as.

\* 12 Col. 2. 12; 2 Tim. 4. 13.

field, and wisely hastens to the transit into Europe. There he forthwith deals in minute



details and full pictures.—*Whedon.* **Phrygia**—The great central space of Asia Minor, yet retaining the name of its earliest inhabitants, and, on account of its being politically subdivided among the contiguous provinces, impossible to define accurately. **Galatia**—The midland district, known as Galatia, or Gallo-Græcia, was inhabited by the descendants of those Gauls who invaded Greece and Asia in the third century B. C., and after various incursions and wars, settled and became mixed with the Greeks in the center of Asia Minor. They were known as a brave and freedom-loving people, fond of war, and, either on their own or others' account, almost always in arms, and generally as cavalry.—*Alford.* The incidental reference to this journey in Gal. 4. 13-15, enables us to fill up Luke's outline. Paul seems to have been detained in Galatia by severe illness, probably by one of the attacks of acute pain in the nerves of the eye in which many writers have seen an explanation of the mysterious "thorn in the flesh" of 2 Cor. 12. 7, which led to his giving a longer time to his missionary work there than he had at first intended. In this illness the Galatians had shown themselves singularly devoted to him. They had received him "as an angel of God, even as Christ Jesus." They had not shrunk from what would seem to have been repulsive in the malady from which he suffered; they would have "plucked out their own eyes," had it

## Revised Version.

of Phry-gi'a and Gal-a'ti-a, having been forbidden of the Holy Ghost to speak

7 the word in A'si-a; and when they were come over against My'si-a, they assayed to go into Bi-thyn'i-a; and the Spirit of Jesus suffered them not; and passing by My'si-a, they came down to

been possible; and given them to replace those which were to him the cause of so much suffering.—*Pumptre.* **Forbidden of the Holy Ghost**—How forbidden, whether by some special providence, or by the direct communication of the Spirit, is not indicated.—*L. Abbott.* **In Asia**—The Asia of the Acts is not even our Asia Minor, which name is not used till the fourth century A. D., but only a portion of the western coast of that great peninsula. This, which was the Roman province of Asia—Asia Proper—as spoken of in the Acts, includes only Mysia, Lydia, and Caria, *excluding Phrygia.*—*Alford.*

7. **Came to Mysia**—He had arrived, apparently, at the point where the corners of Phrygia, Mysia, and Bithynia meet. **Mysia**—A province sometimes regarded as included in Asia. Like Phrygia, the term is used to designate a people rather than a political division. **Bithynia**—This province borders on the Euxine or Black Sea, embracing the northernmost portion of Asia Minor, and extending from the Black Sea on the east to the Bosphorus on the west. Bithynia and Mysia are mentioned in the N. T. only.—*L. Abbott.* **The Spirit** [Rev. Ver., *Spirit of Jesus.*]—The better MSS. and Versions give the reading, "the Spirit of Jesus," which is of some dogmatic importance, as confirming the doctrine that the Spirit stands in the same relation to the Son as to the Father, and may therefore be spoken of either as the Spirit of God, or of Christ, (Rom. 8. 9,) or of Jesus.—*Pumptre.* The Spirit of the glorified Redeemer, who truly lives and reigns, directly interposed on this occasion, where the Gospel was to be carried beyond the confines of one quarter of the globe, and brought to Europe.—*Lechler.*

8. **Came down to Troas**—Their travels had at last led them to the coast, and they looked out upon the waters of the *Ægean*. The town of Alexandria Troas, at this time reckoned as a Roman colony and a free city, recalls to our memories, without entering into vexed questions as to its identity with the site of the older Troy,



## Authorized Version.

9 And a <sup>12</sup>vision appeared to Paul in the night: There stood a man of Mac-e-do'ni-a, and prayed him, saying, Come over into Mac-e-do'ni-a, and help us.

10 And after he had seen the vision, immediately we endeavoured to <sup>12</sup>go into Mac-e-do'ni-a, assuredly gathering that the Lord had called us for to preach the gospel unto them.

<sup>12</sup>Num. 12. 6; chap. 16. 1; 13. 1; 11. 1; Eccl. 9. 10; Rom. 12. 1; 2 Cor. 1. 1.

the great poem of Homer which tells us the tale of Ilium. To Paul that poem was probably unknown, and had it been otherwise, the associations connected with it would have had no charms for him. The question which must have occupied all his thoughts was, where he was next to proclaim the glad tidings of the Christ, and of forgiveness and peace through him. That question, we may well believe, expressed itself in prayer, and to that prayer the vision of the next verse was an answer.—*E. H. Plumptre.*

9. A vision appeared—Stretching his eye across the Ægean Sea, from Troas on the north-east to the Macedonian hills visible on the north-west, the apostle could hardly fail to think this the destined scene of his future labors; and if he retired to rest with this thought he would be thoroughly prepared for the remarkable intimation of the divine will now to be given him. This visional Macedonian discovered himself by what he said. But it was a cry, not of conscious desire for the Gospel, but of deep need of it and unconscious preparedness to receive it, not only in that region, but, we may well say, throughout all the Western Empire which Macedonia might be said to represent.—*D. Brown.* The vision seems to have appeared in the same way as that sent to Peter in chap. 10. It was an unreal apparition, designed to convey a practical meaning. The context precludes our understanding it as a dream.—*Alford.* A man of Macedonia—Known probably by the affecting words spoken by him. There would hardly be any peculiarity of dress by which a Macedonian could be recognized.—*Alford.* Come over . . . and help us—This vision is still perpetuated. The cry of humanity in its sense of need—its guilt and wretchedness, its helpless, hopeless despair—is still sounding now from east to west, as then from west to east. It comes from every heathen continent, and from the many islands, to the Church of every religion, and to the Christian of every name.—*J. G. Butler.*

## Revised Version.

9 Tro'as. And a vision appeared to Paul in the night; There was a man of Mac-e-do'ni-a standing, beseeching him, and saying, Come over into 10 Mac-e-do'ni-a, and help us. And when he had seen the vision, straightway we sought to go forth into Mac-e-do'ni-a, concluding that God had called us for to preach the gospel unto them.

Faithful servants of Jesus walk as in the presence of God continually, by night as well as by day, and conform to his will; when they awake they are still with him. *Psa. 139. 18. — Braudt.*

10. After he had seen—Paul must have consulted his companions as to the purport of the vision.—*W. Jacobson.* We endeavored—This change in the pronoun is the simple, quiet intimation that at and from Troas the narrator became the companion of Paul. This was just after the sojourn in Galatia, where sickness had detained the apostle, (*Gal. 4. 13*;) and it has been thought not unlikely that the beloved physician, being found resident at Troas, was consulted by Paul about his health. From this point the narrative becomes more circumstantial.—*W. Jacobson.* Macedonia—The Roman province of Macedonia comprised Macedonia proper, Epirus, Thessaly, and part of Illyricum.—*Gilong.* The Lord had called us for to preach—This *us* indicates that Luke was not only "the beloved physician," and Paul's "fellow-laborer," and the most eminent historian of Christ and the Church, but that he was called for to preach," and so was a minister of the word.—*D. D. Whedon.*

## Authorities to be Consulted.

See on Lesson I, and also Conybeare and Howson, chap. 8. Farrar's St. Paul, book vi, chap. 24. Schaff's History of Apostolic Church, p. 260. Keble's Christian Year. Stems and Twigs, i, 116. Sermons by Monday Club, 1877, 270. Dean Melville's Sermons, ii, 351. See also Lesson Helps for 1877, Third Quarter. Foster's Cyclopaedia of Illustrations, [numbers marked with a star refer to poetical volumes.] ver. 36-39: \*2735; 39: 1021, 7469; 3: 4278; 6: 7961; 6-10: \*3725; 9: 8040, 10586; 10: 8741, 4781.

## Practical Thoughts.

## [WORKERS FOR CHRIST.]

1. Workers for Christ feel a deep interest in the spiritual state of the Churches which they have founded. *Ver. 36.*

2. Workers for Christ may have serious differences with each other, while whole-hearted in their love for Christ. Vers. 37-39.

3. Workers for Christ should not allow their own differences to interfere with their labor in the Gospel. Vers. 40, 41.

4. Workers for Christ need companionship and fellowship in their toil. Vers. 40, 41.

5. The Christian home is the best school for training workers for Christ. Vers. 1-3.

6. Workers for Christ should seek to follow the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Vers. 6, 7.

7. Workers for Christ find the hearts of men eager for salvation. Vers. 9, 10.

### Sermon Outline.

BY REV. O. H. TIFFANY, D.D.

The office of ministering is of so great importance that caution has always been exercised in the selection of those who are to fulfill its duties.

Gen. 18, 19, "For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment; that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him," shows that in selecting a priest for a household care was taken to know his qualifications.

Num. 17, 8, "And it came to pass, that on the morrow Moses went into the tabernacle of witness; and, behold, the rod of Aaron for the house of Levi was budded, and brought forth buds, and bloomed blossoms, and yielded almonds," shows that in choosing a priest for a nation care was taken to select one whose ministry should be vigorous, full of life and beauty and fruitfulness.

Matt. 10, 1-5, "And when he had called unto him his twelve disciples, he gave them power against unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness, and all manner of disease. Now the names of the twelve apostles are these; The

first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother; Philip, and Bartholomew; Thomas, and Matthew the publican; James the son of Alphaeus, and Lebbeus, whose surname was Thaddeus; Simon the Canaanite, and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed him. These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not," show that Christ *personally* selected the twelve.

Acts 26, 16, "But rise, and stand upon thy feet; for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee," shows that he re-appeared after his ascension to fill the vacancy created by the tragic end of Judas.

Acts 6, 3, "Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business," gives the qualifications necessary for those who were to fill even the secular places in the economy of the infant Church.

In the incident before us we see that in exercising this care a difference of opinion arose which led to a separation of friends and an abandonment of previously arranged plans.

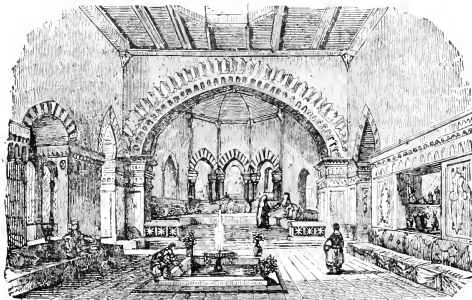
We are thus warned against the danger of allowing personal feeling to influence so important a decision.

Barnabas desired to select "his sister's son;"—the evils of nepotism have been seen in many branches of the Church.

Paul was influenced, by a previous disappointment, to believe in the impossibility of future usefulness from one who had once failed him.

Both are probably in error.

Barnabas' nephew may not have possessed the necessary fortitude for this proposed missionary expedition; but Paul, afterward, called him "fellow-laborer," (Philem. 24.) and "profitable for the ministry." 2 Tim. 4, 11.



Interior of Oriental House.

A. D. 52.]

## LESSON VI.

[Feb. 10.]

## THE CONVERSION OF LYDIA.—Acts 16. 11-24.

**GOLDEN TEXT.**—Whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul.—ACTS 16. 14.

**TIME.**—A. D. 52, directly following the events of the last lesson. For rulers, see Lesson I.

**PLACE.**—Philippi, in Macedonia. See Descriptive Index.

**INTRODUCTION.**—These four men go on board the vessel—Paul, with his fervent soul and his strong intellect; Silas, with his zeal and his prophetic gifts; Luke, with his scholarly culture and professional accomplishments; and Timothy, with his youthful earnestness and as yet undeveloped powers for work. *These four men, guided by the Divine Spirit, come to Europe!* And that ship has in it the seeds of all that is to be developed in the religion and learning, the philosophy, legislation, art, science, and every thing else that has made European nations the acknowledged regal masters of the world.—*T. Binney.*

## Authorized Version.

11 Therefore loosing from Tro'as, we came with a straight course to Sam'o-thra'ci-a, and the next day to Ne-ap'o-lis;

12 And from thence to 'Phi-lip'pi, which is \*the chief city of that part of Mac-e-do'ni-a, and a colony: and we were in that city abiding certain days;

\* Phil. 1. 1.—a Or, the first.

**11. Therefore.**—As a result of the vision named in the last lesson. **Loosing** [Rev. Ver., *Setting sail*] **from Troas**—See last lesson, note on verse 8. *We came by a straight course*, a nautical expression, referring to the favorable nature of the voyage—"we sailed before the wind"—two days were occupied in sailing from Troas to Neapolis, whereas five days were consumed in sailing in a contrary direction from Neapolis to Troas. Acts 20. 6.—*Gloag.* **To Samothracia**—Samothracia, a small island eight miles long and six broad, in the Egean Sea, was so called because it lay off the coast of Thraee, and to distinguish it from the island of Samos, off the coast of Ionia. Acts 20. 15. Its modern name is Samotraki.—*Gloag.* **Neapolis**—On the Macedonian, or rather Thracian, coast, about sixty-five miles from Samothracia, and ten from Philippi, of which it is the harbor.—*D. Brown.* When Paul debarks at Neapolis he sets his foot for the first time on the soil of Europe. From Neapolis, moving to the north-west, he ascends a mountain ridge, from which, in the rear, a beautiful view of the sea which they have crossed is spread before their eyes, while in front they behold the vast plain of Philippi, where was fought one of the great decisive battles of the world.—*Whedon.*

**12. And from thence**—As at Selencia and Attalia and Perga and Piræus and Cencheea, he seemed to regard the port as being merely a

## Revised Version.

11 Setting sail therefore from Tro'as, we made a straight course to Sam'o-thra'ee, and the day following to

12 Ne-ap'o-lis; and from thence to Phil'ip'pi, which is a city of Mac-e-do'ni-a, the first of the district, a Ro'man colony: and we were in this city

starting-point for the inland town.—*Farrar.* **To Philippi**—Philippi was situated about ten miles from the sea, with which it communicated by its port Neapolis. The original name was Crenides, or the Fountains, so called from its numerous springs, afterward it was known by the name of Datum. Datum was a Thracian town, but was conquered by Philip, who rebuilt and fortified it, giving it the name of Philippi after himself B. C. 358. Philippi is celebrated in history as the battle-field where the Roman republic received its death-blow when Brutus and Cassius were totally overthrown by Augustus and Antony. But to Christians it is still more interesting as the city where Paul first preached the Gospel in Europe, and to the Church of which he wrote his epistle. Its site is now occupied by an insignificant village called Filiba. The ruins are extensive, though the only remains of importance are two gate-ways, supposed to belong to the age of Claudius.—*Gloag.* And now a Jewish apostle came to the same place to win a greater victory than that of Philippi, and to found a more durable empire than that of Augustus.—*Howson.* **The chief city**—The first city of the district of Macedonia, that is, of Macedonia proper, at which Paul arrived. The expression is thus understood in a topographical sense.—*Gloag.* **A colony**—A body of Roman citizens thither transferred, as a part of Rome itself,

## Authorized Version.

13 And on the <sup>6</sup> sabbath we went out of the city by a river side, where prayer was wont to be made; and we sat down, and spake unto the women which resorted *thither*.

14 And a certain woman named Lyd'i-a, a seller of purple, of the city of <sup>2</sup>Thy-a-ti'ra, which worshipped God, heard *us*; whose heart <sup>3</sup> the Lord opened,

<sup>6</sup> Sabbath day; chap. 13, 42; 18, 4.—<sup>2</sup> Rev. 2, 18.—<sup>3</sup> Luke 24, 45; Eph. 1, 17.

with all the rights of Roman citizenship. It proudly flaunted all the insignia of Rome. Its magistrates ambitiously bore the Roman titles, as we shall learn from Luke before his narrative is finished. The city itself aimed to be a miniature Rome. The Romans planted here were the soldiers of Antony, sent by Augustus. Of course, it would be a very serious thing here to violate the sacred person of a Roman.—*Wheldon*. **Abiding certain days**—Perhaps some days previous to the Sabbath mentioned in the next verse.—*L. Abbott*. Probably at a public house, and at their own charge, for they had no friend to invite them so much as to a meal's meat till Lydia welcomed them.—*M. Henry*.

13. **On the Sabbath**—The seventh day of the week. **We went out** [Rev. Ver., *We went forth without the gate*] **by a river-side**—Probably the Gangas, or Gangites, a small rivulet which flows close by Philippi, generally dry in summer, but swollen in winter.—*Hackett*. From many sources we learn that it was the practice of the Jews to hold their assemblies for prayer *near water*, whether of the sea or of rivers, probably on account of the frequent washings customary among them.—*Alford*. **Where prayer was wont to be made** [Rev. Ver., *Where we supposed was a place of prayer*]—*Where a place of prayer (proseucha) was wont to be*. The *proseucha* were places of prayer which the Jews had in cities where, either on account of the smallness of their numbers, or the prohibition of the magistrates, they had no synagogues. Sometimes they were buildings, and at other times they were open places, such as groves, gardens, etc. Sometimes they were within the walls of cities, but in general without the gates.—*Glog*. It would appear that there was no synagogue at Philippi. The number of Jews seems to have been small, as it was not a mercantile, but a military, town. We do not read of opposition from the Jews as in other places, and the *proseucha* by the river-side was

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13 tarrying certain days. And on the sabbath day we went forth without the gate by a river-side, where we supposed there was a place of prayer; and we sat down, and spake unto the women which were come together.

14 And a certain women named Lyd'i-a, a seller of purple, of the city of Thy-a-ti'ra, one that worshipped God,

frequented only by women.—*Glog*. **Sat down**—The posture of teachers, chap. 13, 14; Luke 4, 20. **Spake unto the women**—Like the Master at Jacob's well, Paul throws into this simple ministry as much earnestness of purpose and thoroughness of instruction as afterward he employed in addressing the vast multitude of cultured Athenians. And this unreported conversation produced a rich harvest, while the grand discourse at Athens was almost barren of fruit.—*J. G. Butler*.

14. **Lydia, a seller of purple**—That is, of purple dyes, and of goods dyed purple. The Lydians, particularly the inhabitants of Thyatira, were celebrated for their dyeing, in which they inherited the reputation of the Tyrians. Inscriptions to this effect, yet remaining, confirm the accuracy of our historian. This woman appears to have been in good circumstances, having an establishment at Philippi large enough to accommodate the missionary party, (verse 15,) and receiving her goods from her native town.—*D. Brown*. Dyeing is still a customary trade in the East; the dyer's shop, a room not more than ten or twelve feet square, is usually placed directly on the street among others of the same trade; the cloths, after dipping in the vats, are hung outside to dry, the passers in the streets avoiding them if they can.—*L. Abbott*. **Of Thyatira**—A city of Lydia in Asia Minor. The fact that Lydia is described as *of the city of Thyatira*, does not indicate that Philippi was not at this time her permanent residence. Similarly Paul speaks of himself as a Jew of Tarsus, in chaps. 21, 39; 22, 3.—*L. Abbott*. The first convert in Greece is from the very province in Asia Minor where the Spirit had forbidden them to preach.—*J. G. Butler*. **Which worshiped God**—She was a proselyte, and, as the sequel shows, one of the better type drawn to Judaism, not by superstitious fear, or weak credulity, but by the higher ethical and spiritual teaching which it presented.—*Plumptre*. **Heart the Lord opened**—The heart is of itself closed; but it is for God to open

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that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul.

15 And when she was baptized, and her household, she besought us, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful <sup>4</sup>to the Lord, come into my house, and abide *there*. And she <sup>5</sup>constrained us.

16 And it came to pass, as we went

\* Gal. 6, 10.—† Gen. 19, 3, &c. 11; Judges 19, 21; Luke 24, 29.

it.—*Bengel*. The things which were spoken—It appears rather to have been a *conversation* (notice above, *we spoke*—not “we spoke the word”) than a set discourse.—*Alford*.

The grace of God comes quite as freely, and, it is to be feared, more frequently, to “the maker and seller of purple,” than to the wearer of it.—*J. Ford*.

He did open the heart of Lydia to conceive well; the ears of the prophet (Isa. 50) to hear well; the eyes of Elisha's servant (2 Kings 6) to see well, and the lips of David (Psa. 51) to speak well.—*Dean Boys*.

15. She was baptized, and her household

—Upon this statement, as an evidence of infant baptism, Dr. Schaff well argues, quoting the well-known passages: Acts 10, 2, 44-48; 16, 15, 30-33; 18, 8; 1 Cor. 1, 16; 16, 15. In none of these places, it is said, are children expressly mentioned, and the families concerned might possibly have consisted entirely of adults. But this is, even in itself, exceedingly improbable, since we have here, not one case only, but five, and these given merely as examples, whence we may readily infer that there were many others. A glance at any neighborhood will show that families without children are the exceptions, not the rule. But, besides, it is hardly conceivable that all the adult sons and daughters, in these five cases, so quickly determined on going over with their parents to a despised and persecuted religious society; whereas, if we suppose the children to have been still young, and therefore entirely under paternal authority, the matter presents no difficulty at all.—*Schaff*. [On the other side of the argument we give a Baptist commentator's view.] No hint is given that Lydia had a husband or children. But even if she had, there is no reason to suppose they were then with her; she was at a long distance from home, nearly three hundred miles, according to the usual computation, and on a trading journey. She was temporarily in a foreign city, pursuing her traffic. Her household, there can be no reasonable doubt, consisted of persons who were associated with

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heard us; whose heart the Lord opened, to give heed unto the things which were spoken by Paul. And when she was baptized, and her household, she besought us, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide *there*. And she constrained us.

16 And it came to pass, as we were

her, or employed by her, in her business. Chrysostom, an ancient distinguished Greek interpreter, as well as preacher, says on this passage, “See how she persuaded them all!” taking it for granted, from the circumstances of the case, that the members of her household were of an age capable of instruction and persuasion.—*H. J. Ripley*. What may fairly be deduced from the language of this verse is this: that by reason of Lydia's faith her household were brought unto Christ and his Church. The first field for the ministry of the young convert is his home.—*L. Abbott*. She besought us—Not a mere invitation, but earnest entreaty is indicated. If ye have judged me to be faithful—If you deem me a Christian, or a believer.—*Barnes*. Come into my house—Up to this time the teachers, four in number, had been, we must believe, living in a lodging and maintaining themselves, as usual, by labor, Paul as a tent-maker, Luke, probably, as a physician. Now the large-hearted hospitality of Lydia (the offer implies a certain measure of wealth, as, indeed, did her occupation, which required a considerable capital) led her to receive them as her guests. They did not readily abandon the independent position which their former practice secured them, and only yielded to the kind “constraint” to which they were exposed.—*Plumptre*.

The life of hospitality is cheerfulness. Let our cheer be never so great, if we do not read our welcome in our friend's face, as well as in his dishes, we take no pleasure in it.—*Bishop Hall*.

16. It came to pass—Not on the same day, but, evidently, some time after. Paul and his companions continued for several Sabbaths to frequent the *proseucha* by the river-side, and to discourse there to the women assembled.—*Gloag*. As we went to prayer [Rev. Ver., *As we were going to the place of prayer*.]—They habitually resorted to this place of prayer to teach, and what follows happened on such oc-

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to prayer, a certain <sup>6</sup>damsel possessed with a spirit <sup>c</sup>of divination met us, which brought her masters <sup>7</sup>much gain by soothsaying:

17 The same followed Paul and us, and cried, saying, These men are the servants of the most high God, which show unto us the way of salvation.

18 And this did she many days. But Paul, being <sup>8</sup>grieved, turned and said to

<sup>6</sup> 1 Sam. 28. 7.—<sup>c</sup> Or, of Python.—<sup>7</sup> Chap. 19. 24.—<sup>8</sup> Mark 1. 25, 34.

casions.—*Alford.* A spirit of divination—Literally, *A Pythonic spirit.* Python was the serpent that guarded Delphi, which was slain by Apollo; and hence that god was called Pythias. In the temple of Apollo the organ of the oracle was always a woman, said to be inspired by the god. The heathen inhabitants of Philippi, accordingly, regarded this woman as inspired by Apollo; and Luke here uses the term in accommodation to their views. She was a demoniac, and not an impostor. Paul addresses the evil spirit, and commands him to come out of her; and we are informed that he came out of her the same hour. We are not, however, to suppose that Paul adopted the superstitious notions of the heathen, that this woman was inspired by Apollo. He himself asserts that an idol is nothing in the world. 1 Cor. 8. 4. To him the individual deity, Apollo, was a nonentity—a mere phantom of the imagination. Apollo did not actuate this slave, but some evil spirit did. According to the views of the heathens, she had a Pythonic spirit; according to the views of Paul, she was a demoniac, similar to those who are so frequently mentioned in the gospels.—*Gloag.* This case may answer the question, How is it that demoniac possession is unknown out of Palestine and out of the time of our Saviour's life? Underlying all the falsehood and deception of heathen myths and oracles there was a demoniac element. In the frenzy of the bacchanals, the corybantes, and the pythonesses, there was a true possession, modified by the nature of that dispensation.—*Whedon.* **Brought her masters**—She was a slave, and the property of several owners in a copartnership. **Much gain by soothsaying**—In ancient times the fortune-tellers and magicians were more largely believed in and more generally consulted than in the present age of intelligence. Yet many have amassed fortunes, even in this age, by pretending to read the future.

17. Followed Paul and us—Not on one oc-

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going to the place of prayer, that a certain maid having <sup>1</sup>a spirit of divination met us, which brought her masters much gain by soothsaying.

17 The same following after Paul and us cried out, saying, These men are <sup>2</sup>servants of the Most High God, which proclaim unto you <sup>3</sup>the way 18 of salvation. And this she did for many days. But Paul being sore

<sup>1</sup> Gr. a spirit, a Python.—<sup>2</sup> Gr. bond-servants.—<sup>3</sup> Or, a way.

casions only, but as a habit. **Cried saying**—Note some symptom of a divided consciousness. We lose much of the human interest of the narrative if we merely think of a demon bearing, as in mockery, his witness to the work of Christ, in order that he might thwart that work. That continual cry spoke, we may well believe, of the girl's mind as longing for deliverance and peace and calm. She sees in the preachers those whom she recognizes as able to deliver her, as unlike as possible to the masters who traded on her maddened misery. And yet the thralldom in which she found herself led her to the cries that simply impeded their work.—*E. H. Plumptre.* **Way of salvation**—Secular men cannot indulge usually in language so spiritual; but the demons knew the full force of spiritual phraseology. The devils believe and tremble.—*Whedon.*

18. **This did she many days**—Why Paul allowed the evil spirit to go on unrebuked for many days it is difficult to say, unless it be an indication of hesitation, if not timidity, of which other indications are afforded by his course, in preaching only to the proselytes at Philippi (verse 13,) to the Jews only at Thessalonica and Berea, (chap. 17. 2, 10,) and his first ministry at Corinth, (chap. 18. 1-5; 1 Cor. 2. 3.) From prudential motives he perhaps hesitated to provoke a controversy with heathenism by a direct attack on one of its most cherished and potent superstitions.—*L. Abbott.* **Paul being grieved** [*Rev. Ver., Sore troubled.*]—Paul was grieved; probably, (1) Because her presence was troublesome to him; (2) Because it might be said that he was in alliance with her, and that his pretensions were just like hers; (3) Because what she did was for the sake of gain, and was a base imposture; (4) Because her state was one of bondage and delusion, and it was proper to free her from this demoniacal possession, and (5) Because the system under which she was acting was a part of a vast scheme of delusion and imposture, which had spread over a large portion of the

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the spirit, I command thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her.  
 \* And he came out the same hour.

19 And <sup>10</sup> when her masters saw that the hope of their gains was gone, <sup>11</sup> they caught Paul and Silas, and <sup>12</sup> drew *them* into the <sup>4</sup> market-place unto the rulers.

20 And brought them to the magistrates, saying, These men, being Jews, do <sup>13</sup> exceedingly trouble our city.

21 And teach customs, which are not lawful for us to receive, neither to observe, being Romans.

\* Mark 16. 17.—<sup>10</sup> Chap. 19. 25; Phil. 1. 19.—<sup>11</sup> 2 Cor. 6. 5.—  
<sup>12</sup> Matt. 10. 18.—*d Or.* count.—<sup>13</sup> 1 Kings 17. 17; chap. 17. 6.

pagan world, and which was then holding it in bondage. — *Barnes*. In the name of Jesus Christ—Christ performed miracles in his own name; the apostle did so in the name of Christ. The one was the Son; the others were the servants of the household. — *Gloag*. Come out of her—It seems to me, both from Paul's language and from Luke's, that this was a case of such possession, and that the act of Paul did not merely expose a fraud, nor calm the perturbed mind of a lunatic, but really delivered this unfortunate from the evil spirit which possessed her. — *L. Abbott*. Came out the same hour—Here the history ends, as far as the damsel was concerned; but we can hardly think that she was left to drift back into ignorance and unbelief. Would not such a one find shelter and comfort at the hands of the women who "labored" with the apostle? — *E. H. Plumptre*.

19. The hope of their gains was gone—The first heathen persecution, like that subsequently at Ephesus, (chap. 19. 25-27,) was set on foot by covetousness. Comp. 1 Tim. 6. 9, 10. Like the Gergesenes, (Matt. 8. 28-31,) they cared nothing that a soul had been saved in comparison with the loss of their gains. — *L. Abbott*. Caught Paul and Silas—As the leaders. Luke and Timothy seem not to have been seized, either because they were not present, or because they were less prominent, or because, not being Jews, they were less obnoxious to the Greek population. — *L. Abbott*. Market-place—The *agora* or *forum*; where legal business was transacted by the magistrates. — *D. D. Whedon*.

Many a slave-dealer, and many a trafficker in ardent spirits, and many a man engaged in other unlawful modes of gain, have been unwilling to abandon their employments, simply because the

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troubled, turned and said to the spirit, I charge thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her. And it came out that very hour.

19 But when her masters saw that the hope of their gain was <sup>4</sup> gone, they laid hold on Paul and Silas, and dragged them into the market-  
 20 place before the rulers, and when they had brought them into the <sup>5</sup> magistrates, they said, these men, being Jews, do exceeding trouble  
 21 our city, and set forth customs which it is not lawful for us to receive, or  
 22 to observe, being Ro'mans. And the

\* *Gr.* come out.—\* *Gr.* *prætors*.

hopes of their gain would be destroyed. No small part of the opposition to the Gospel arises from the fact that, if embraced, it would strike at so much of the dishonorable employment of men, and make them honest and conscientious. — *Barnes*.

20. Brought them to the magistrates (*Greek prætors*.)—The usual name of the two chief magistrates of a Roman colony was *duumviri*, answering to the consuls of Rome. They, however, took a pride in calling themselves by the Roman title, *prætores*, as being a more honorable appellation. — *Gloag*. Being Jews—Used in a contemptuous manner, to excite the *prætors* and the multitude against the disciples. The Jews were despised and hated by the Gentiles, and were at this time in special disgrace, as they had lately been banished from Rome by Claudius. The magistrates would be especially enraged if they found that Jews were propagating their noxious opinions among the citizens. The distinction between Christians and Jews does not appear to have been recognized at Philippi. — *Gloag*. A mob, with a magistrate to match, will be at no loss for a charge against their common victim. — *Whedon*.

21. Customs not lawful—Judaism was a permitted religion for the Jews. Nevertheless they were not allowed to propagate their religion among the Roman pagans, who were expressly forbidden, under heavy penalties, to undergo circumcision. — *Nander*. Being Romans—The accusation was craftily composed; on the one hand, they boast of the name of Romans, than which no name was more honorable; on the other hand, they excite hatred against the apostles, and bring them into contempt by calling them Jews, which name was at that time infamous; for, as regards religion, the Romans had

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22 And the multitude rose up together against them; and the magistrates rent off their clothes, and <sup>14</sup>commanded to beat *them*.

23 And <sup>15</sup>when they had laid many stripes upon them, they cast *them* into prison, charging the jailer to keep them safely:

24 Who, having received such a charge, thrust them into the inner prison, and made their feet fast in the <sup>16</sup>stocks.

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multitude rose up together against them: and the <sup>6</sup>magistrates rent their garments off them, and commanded to beat them with rods.

23 And when they had laid many stripes upon them, they cast them into prison, charging the jailor to keep them

24 safely: who, having received such a charge, cast them into the inner prison, and made their feet fast in the stocks.

<sup>14</sup> 2 Cor. 6. 5; 11. 23.—<sup>15</sup> Luke 21. 1; Eph. 3. 1-13; Rev. 2. 10.  
—<sup>16</sup> Jer. 20. 2.

<sup>6</sup> Gr. *protors*.

less affinity to the Jews than any other nation.—*Calvin*.

22. **The multitude rose up**—The multitude made common cause with the masters of the female slave against the Christians: there was a popular tumult; and the *protors*, terrified thereby, without examining into the case, hastily commanded Paul and Silas to be beaten, in order to appease the clamors of the people.—**Magistrates rent off their clothes**—They commanded the lictors to do so. When persons were ordered to be scourged, the clothes were violently pulled off by the executioners. **Commanded to beat them**—The usual sentence was concisely and majestically Roman: *Summove lictor, despolia, verbera*—“Take lictor, strip, scourge.”—*D. D. Whedon*. Probably in the tumult there was no opportunity for Paul and Silas to claim their privilege of Roman citizenship; or it may be that a Divine intimation was given them that the Gospel would be the more honored by their submission, for the time being, to the wrong.

23. **Laid many stripes**—There was no limitation of the number, as under the Mosaic Law. The apostle refers to this outrage 1 Thess. 2. 2; 2 Cor. 6. 5. The magistrates probably intended to investigate the case on the morrow. This scourging, it may be presumed, was to keep the people quiet for the night.—*W. Jacobson*. Such horrors occurred eight times at least in the story of one whose frame was more frail with years of suffering than that of our English missionaries, and in whose life these pangs were but such a drop in the ocean of his endurance that, of the eight occasions on which he underwent these horrible scourgings, this alone has been deemed worthy of even passing commemoration.—*Farrar*. To

keep them safely—Perhaps, after the exorcism, it was apprehended that they might have some mysterious power for affecting their own liberation.—*W. Jacobson*.

24. **The inner prison**—This may mean either the cell in the center of the building, or more likely the lower dungeon. The Roman prison was in three stories, of which the lower was below the ground, and entered only by a hole in the roof, down which the prisoner was thrown, and through which alone could light and air enter. Howson illustrates this *inner prison* by that “dungeon in the court of the prison,” into which Jeremiah was let down with cords, and where he “sunk in the mire.” “They were cells, damp and cold, from which the light was excluded, and where the chains rusted on the limbs of the prisoners.”—*Whedon*. **Fast in**



Stocks.

**the stocks**—The stocks was an instrument not only of detention, but of torture. It consisted of a wooden block, furnished with holes, into which the legs of the prisoner were put, and which could be stretched from each other. Potter, in his *Roman Antiquities*, tells us that, not unfrequently, they dislocated the joints. Eusebius informs us that Origen, in his old age, was put to this torture. “For many days he was extended and stretched to the distance of four holes on the rack.” *Hist. Eccles.*, vi, 39. In this condition it might be necessary for them to lie on their backs; and if this, as is probable, was on the cold ground, after their



severe scourging, their sufferings must have been very great.—*Barnes.*

#### Authorities to be Consulted.

See list of commentaries, Lesson I. Farrar's *St. Paul*, chap. xxv. Conybeare and Howson, chap. ix. Dr. Schaff, p. 262. Freeman's *Manners and Customs*, 838, 839, 806. E. H. Plumptre's *Biblical Studies*, 402. Guthrie's *Sunday Magazine* 1870, p. 405. *Pulpit Analyst*, ii, 278; iii, 533. *Monday Club Sermons* 1877, p. 280. *Lesson Helps* for 1877, 3d Quarter. Sermons on the Conversion of Lydia, by Wm. Jay, J. B. Romeyn, H. M. Dexter. On Paul and Silas in Prison, by N. W. Taylor. *Foster's Cyclopaedia of Illustrations*, [numbers marked with a star refer to poetical illustrations,] ver. 12-18: \*3725; 13: 11061; 14, 15: \*3723, 2826; 15: 3255, 9632; 16: 89141; 20, 21: 4105.

#### Practical Thoughts.

##### [HOW CHRIST BUILDS HIS CHURCH.]

1. Christ builds his Church by controlling the forces of nature, winds and waves, in its interest. Ver. 11.
2. Christ builds his Church in the hearts of people who are sincere seekers after the truth. Ver. 13.
3. Christ chooses for his Church those who are workers and not idlers, belonging to the fellowship of toil. Ver. 14.
4. Christ builds his Church by opening the heart to the influences of truth. Ver. 14.
5. Christ develops in his Church the spirit of hospitality, gladly giving entertainment to his workers. Ver. 15.
6. Christ builds his Church by compelling even demons to honor his servants. Vers. 16-18.
7. Christ builds his Church through persecutions, when they will minister to his glory. Vers. 19-24.

#### Sermon-Outline.

BY D. WISE, D.D.

INTRODUCTION.—Paul's call into Macedonia. Vers. 9, 10. Arrival at Philippi, a Roman colony; few resident Jews, no synagogue, only one of those slight structures, called *Proseucha*, by the river (the *Gangitis*) side for the sake of quiet and of water for their ablutions. On Sabbath Paul found a small band, chiefly women, at this spot, among them Lydia, not a Jewess, but a proselyte from Thyatira, a place famous for its "guild of dyers." Here Paul preached probably the first Gospel sermon ever heard in Europe. And this Lydia, an Asiatic by birth, was its first-fruit. Let us study the process of her conversion and its results.

1. **The process of her conversion.** Three influences or moral forces co-operated in bringing it about, (a) a human instrument; (b) a divine agent; (c) her own will.

1. **The human instrument.** Paul. He spoke to the little knot of worshippers, no doubt, with simplicity, earnestness, sincerity, telling them the story of the Cross. Nothing in his sermon not to be found in his discourses and letters as we have them. Nothing essentially different from a single Gospel sermon by a fervent preacher of to-day.

2. **The divine Agent.** The Lord, the Holy Spirit, opened her heart. Not by any extraordinary measure of spiritual energy, but by that breathing, gentle influence implied in the phrase of the text. Nothing irresistible, but just that irradiation of the intellect suggested by his operation as the "light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world." That light quickened her conscience so that she felt herself to be a sinner; it also helped her to see the love of Christ, and the willingness of God to save her. What the Spirit did in Lydia's mind he does constantly in all who hear a pure Gospel preached.

3. **Lydia's will determined the result.** She might have listened to her prejudices, to her natural dislike of the high ethical claims of the Gospel, to her fear of persecution, or to her pride, and have remained as she was—a proselyte of the Jews. But she willed otherwise. She listened attentively. She permitted the truth to pass through her intellect and conscience into her affections. She submitted to Christ, she believed. By this voluntary co-operation with the sweet influences of the divine Agent she found salvation, as all may who hear the Gospel to-day.

#### II. Its result.

1. **A prompt public profession of her faith.** She accepted baptism at once. There was no cowardly hesitation, no doubting, no shrinking from consequences, but a noble self-surrender to Christ and his cause. The new life in her heart was proof enough for her that Paul's Gospel was divinely true. Hers is a grand example for modern converts.

2. **An immediate interest in the spiritual welfare of her household.** Of what her household consisted we are not told. Whether of children, servants, or assistants in her business is not stated. But such as it was, she persuaded them to follow her example, thereby teaching us that one natural fruit of sound conversion is concern for the spiritual affairs of one's family and friends.

3. **A generous Christian hospitality.** She constrained Paul and his companions to make her house their home. This was a virtue in her, and a benediction to those who had led her into the truth. It is a virtue but too little practiced in modern times. Yet how and when it is to be practiced must be determined by individual judgment.

4. **She did not shrink from the cause when it was persecuted in the person of Paul and Silas.**

After their scourging and imprisonment she still kept her house open for their shelter. Ver. 40. This act proved the genuineness of her faith, the bravery of her woman's nature, the greatness of her fidelity to Christ. Times have changed, but her spirit is as necessary to-day as it was when she lived. Christ still needs disciples who are superior to the scorn,

the contempt, the hostility of sinners and half-hearted professors to his cause.

*The lesson.* Lydia, in her submission to Christ, is an example to unregenerate bearers of the Gospel. In her consistent care for her household, and her fidelity to Paul in his persecutions, she is a mirror reflecting a beautiful illustration of Christian consistency.

## THE CONVERSION OF THE JAILER.—Acts 16. 25-40.

**GOLDEN TEXT.**—Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.—ACTS 16. 31.

**TIME.**—A. D. 52, directly following the events of the last lesson. For rulers, see Lesson I.

**PLACE.**—Philippi, in Macedonia. See Descriptive Index.

**INTRODUCTION.**—Though the speakers were bound that night, the Word was free; not only the word that went upward to the throne of God, but also the echo of that word that pierced the gloomy partition-walls and sank into the startled ears of weary and wretched prisoners. It seemed a roundabout road that the word of the Gospel took to reach these motley groups of Greek and Latin Gentiles, but the word did not miss its way. There was a dead wall between the apostles and their audience, and therefore they did not preach that night. But there was no wall between them and the Father of their spirits; praying, they hymned God in the inner prison, and the prayer sent upward fell down again on the other side of the partition, falling there on listening ears. In this circuitous method the Gospel reached some needy souls.—*Arnot.* Observe the character of the jailer: a heathen, with no previous knowledge of the Gospel, and no faith in, probably no knowledge even of, the one true God. That he was not a proselyte is certain from verse 34; that he had no previous sympathy with the apostles is equally certain from his treatment of them. Ver. 24. Not only a heathen, but a man of probably brutal nature. The jailers were also torturers and executioners, were taken from the lower classes of society, and were brutalized by their vocation. No more hopeless case for conversion can be readily conceived.—*L. Abbott.*

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25 And at midnight Paul and Si'las prayed, and <sup>1</sup> sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them.

<sup>1</sup> Matt. 5, 16, 11; chap. 5, 41; Col. 1, 24; 2 Tim. 1, 8.

**25. Midnight**—When perfect exhaustion from scourge and stocks might have been expected.—*D. D. Whedon.* **Prayed and sang praises**—Better, *praying, they were singing hymns*, the Greek expressing one act rather than two. The act was, we may believe, habitual, and they would not intermit it even in the dungeon, and fastened as they were so that they could not kneel.—*E. H. Plumptre.* **Praises unto God**—For the high privilege of suffering for Christ. Here, as in the case of Stephen, the joy of the martyr in suffering was displayed for an example to all who should suffer. So by glorious suffering the cause of a suffering Master should triumph.—*D. D. Whedon.* Their legs in the stocks pained them not whose souls were in heaven.—*Tertullian.* **The prisoners heard them** [Rev. Ver., *Were listening to them.*]—Better, *were listening eagerly*, the kind of listening which men give to a musical performance. Never before,

## Revised Version.

25 But about midnight Paul and Si'las were praying and singing hymns unto God, and the prisoners were

we may be sure, had those outcasts and criminals heard such sounds in such a place. For the most part those vaults echoed only with wild curses and foul jests.—*E. H. Plumptre.* It is altogether probable that some who heard that strange psalm-singing were among the Philippian Christians to whom Paul subsequently addressed his most affectionate letter from another prison in Rome.—*Arnot.*

When Madame Guyon was imprisoned in the Castle of Vincennes, in 1695, she not only sang, but wrote songs of praise to her God. "It sometimes seemed to me," she said, "as if I were a little bird whom the Lord had placed in a cage, and that I had nothing now to do but sing. The joy of my heart gave a brightness to the objects around me. The stones of my prison looked in my eyes like rubies. I esteemed them more than all the gaudy brilliances of a vain world. My heart was full of that joy which Thou givest to them that love thee in the midst of their greatest crosses."—*Biblical Museum.*

## Authorized Version.

26 And <sup>2</sup>suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken: and immediately <sup>3</sup>all the doors were opened, and every one's bands were loosed.

27 And the keeper of the prison awaking out of his sleep, and seeing the prison doors open, he drew out his sword, and would have killed himself, supposing that the prisoners had been fled.

28 But Paul cried with a loud voice, saying, <sup>4</sup>Do thyself no harm; for we are all here.

<sup>2</sup> Chap. 4, 31.—<sup>3</sup> Chap. 5, 19.—<sup>4</sup> Exod. 20, 13; 1 John 3, 15.

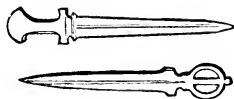
**26. And suddenly**—This miracle was a true, illustrious, and necessary "divine sign," confirming the apostles in the reality of the divine invitation, from the man of Macedonia, of Christianity into Europe.—*Whedon*. **There was a great earthquake**—In the year 53 A. D., the date of this event, according to one scheme of chronology, Apamea suffered so severely from an earthquake that all tribute was remitted for five years. Such a shock might well have been felt in Macedonia; and the coincidence, if it admitted of proof, would not impair the emphasis and importance of the testimony borne to the teaching of Paul and Silas.—*W. Jacobson*. **Doors were opened**—The walls being shaken, the doors were flung apart by the concussion. **Bands were loosed**—The chains of the prisoners were fastened, we must remember, to rings or staples in the wall, and the effect of a great shock would be to loosen the stones, and so make it easy to escape.—*Plumptre*. A remarkable illustration of answer to prayer; and observe that this answer involves a divine interference with nature, though not a violation of natural law. We must know a great deal more about earthquakes and their causes than we do now to assert that it is irrational to believe that such an earthquake should be sent in answer to prayer.—*L. Abbott*.

Baumgarten also plausibly shows that this whole scene was a symbol and a shadow of the future history of Christianity in Europe. Philippi, as a *colonia*, is an image, ambitiously so, of the Roman pagan power. She opens the first Gentile persecution against the Church, emblem of the pagan persecution for four centuries. For three centuries the martyred Church sings her songs of triumph in the midnight, and the bloodshed, and the stocks. Yet the very foundations of that inner structure are shaken, and by the very majesty of the secular power is the Church at last enfranchised.—*D. D. Whedon*.

## Revised Version.

26 listening to them; and suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison-house were shaken; and immediately all the doors were opened; and every one's bands were loosed. And the jailer being roused out of sleep, and seeing the prison doors open, drew his sword, and was about to kill himself, supposing that the prisoners had escaped. But Paul cried with a loud voice, saying, Do thyself no harm; for we are all here. And he

**27. Keeper of the prison**—Often a veteran soldier; most likely to have been so in a military colony.—*Jacobson*. **Awaking**—Luke omits his rising and hurrying to the prison cells with a dim torch for examination. He has seen at a glance that the doors are open, and hastily concludes that all have fled. He is before the open cell of Paul, more visible, by the light of his own torch, to Paul than Paul to him.—*Whedon*. **Drew out his sword**—The well-known Roman sword,



Roman Swords.

short and double-edged. **Would have killed himself** [Rev. Ver., *Was about to kill himself.*]—Suicide to a Roman of that day was very much a matter of indifference. Brutus and Cassius, models of Roman virtue, had committed it at or near Philippi, and many of their adherents, finding themselves proscribed, did the same. Christianity first taught men to estimate life and death rightly.—*W. Jacobson*. Under the Roman law the jailer was liable to undergo the punishment which the malefactors who escaped by his negligence were to have suffered. See chap. 12, 19. Hence the pains which the soldiers took to make sure of the death of Christ. John 19, 34. The jailer would have avoided death and disgrace by suicide.—*L. Abbott*. **That the prisoners had been fled**—Was the contrary the result of awe, or were they under supernatural restraint?—*W. Jacobson*.

**28. Paul cried**—Perfectly self-possessed, as afterward in the shipwreck. Did some desperate utterance of the jailer betray his purpose, or was it divinely intimated to the apostle?—*Jacobson*.

## Authorized Version.

29 Then he called for a light, and sprang in, and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Si'las.

30 And brought them out, and said, Sirs, what <sup>o</sup> must I do to be saved?

31 And they said, <sup>o</sup> Believe on the Lord Je'sus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.

\* Luke 3, 10. — \* Isa. 45, 22; John 3, 16, 36; 6, 47; 1 John 5, 10.

**Do thyself no harm**—Few and simple as the words are, they are eminently characteristic of the love and sympathy which burnt in Paul's heart. For him the suicide which others would have admired, or at least have thought of without horror, would have been the most terrible of all forms of death. — *Plumptre*. A memorable caution which Christianity addresses, not only to this desperate purpose of suicide, but to every man who is ruining himself by sin, whether in health, in estate, in body, in intellect, in soul. All sinners are suicides, cruel to themselves, relentless upon their own natures. — *Whedon*. Contrast with it the counsel of Seneca, "If life pleases you, live; if not, you have a right to return whence you came."

**29. Called for a light** [Rev. Ver., *lights*.]—More truly, called for *lights*, plural. He must have already had *light* sufficient to have learned the state of things. He now calls upon the servants to bring lights to restore the prison to order while he proceeds to bring the apostles from their inner cell. — *Whedon*. **Sprang in**—Into the cell where Paul and Silas were. **Came trembling**—Under the resistless conviction that there must be something supernatural in their instantaneous liberation without human hand, such wonder and awe should possess them as to take away for the time not only all desire of escape, but even all thought on the subject. — *D. Brown*. **Fell down before Paul and Silas**—Not worshipping them as gods but, like the pythoness, recognizing them as the showers of the way of salvation; salvation, namely, from divine justice. — *Whedon*.

**30. Brought them out**—He may have brought them into the hall or aisle between the inner and outer rows of cells. The other prisoners probably remained within their cells, as none appear to have escaped, and to none does the word seem to have been preached. — *Whedon*. **What must I do to be saved**—It is the Gospel salvation after which he inquires, the salvation which Paul and Silas had proclaimed; and so Paul understood the question. Paul and

## Revised Version.

called for lights, and sprang in, and, trembling for fear, fell down before

30 Paul and Si'las, and brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do

31 to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Je'sus, and thou shalt

32 be saved, thou and thy house. And

Silas had probably been for several weeks in Philippi preaching the Gospel before they had been arrested. Their preaching must have created excitement in the city, and, without doubt, reports of it had reached the jailer, even if he himself had not heard them. And thus awakened in his conscience, and believing, in some confused manner, that these men were "the servants of the most high God, who announce the way of salvation," he asks the most momentous question which can be put by any human being.—*Gloag*. Such an event as this earthquake brings the eternal world near, and gives to the dullest soul some sense of his spiritual needs. The same motive which leads the soldier in battle, and the sailor in storm, to pray, though he has never prayed before, led the jailer to ask one who had proved himself an unexpected friend what he should do for personal salvation.—*L. Abbott*.

**31. And they said**—The plural pronoun is not without significance. Paul was not the only teacher. Silvanus also took part in the work of conversion.—*Plumptre*. Considering *who the person was* that asked the question—a heathen in the depths of ignorance and sin—and how indisputably, therefore, the answer embraces *all sinners whatever*—there perhaps does not stand on record in the whole book a more important answer than this of Paul—or, I may add, one more strikingly characteristic of the apostle himself than his teaching. — *Alford*. **Believe**—It meant full self-surrender, in face of whatever persecution of body, soul, and spirit, of life, name, and history over to Christ. Yet instantly, completely, and probably forever, was this great revolution of soul completed.—*Whedon*. **On the Lord Jesus Christ**—The Greek presents a contrast which is lost in the English. He had called them by the usual title of respect, *Kyrii*, (sirs, or lords;) they answer that there is one *Kyrios*, the Lord Jesus Christ, who alone can save.—*Plumptre*. **And thy house**—Not that they should be saved without faith, but that their faith should be awakened through

## Authorized Version.

32 And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house.

33 And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed *their* stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straight-way.

34 And when he had brought them into his house, <sup>7</sup> he set meat before them, <sup>8</sup> and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house.

35 And when it was day, the magis-

## Revised Version.

they spake the word of <sup>1</sup>the Lord unto him, with all that were in his

33 house. And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and  
34 all his, immediately. And he brought them up into his house, and set <sup>2</sup>meat before them, and rejoiced greatly, with all his house, <sup>3</sup>having believed in God.

35 But when it was day, the <sup>4</sup>magis-

<sup>1</sup>Luke 5, 29; 19, 6.—<sup>2</sup>1 Sam. 2, 1; 1 Chron. 16, 19; Psa. 5, 11; 119, 111; Rom. 5, 2; Heb. 3, 6; 1 Peter 1, 6, 8.

<sup>3</sup>Some ancient authorities read *God*.—<sup>4</sup>Gr. *a table*.—<sup>5</sup>Or *having believed God*.—<sup>6</sup>Gr. *prators*.

his.—*L. Abbott.* Or, as Alford suggests, "Their household may be saved on the same terms."

32. **They spake . . . the word**—The apostles lengthened their reply to the jailer's earnest question by explaining to him in the briefest words the *way of salvation*. The *lights* had been brought, and naturally his whole family gather around him and the apostles standing in the hall, so that the word reaches *all that were in his house*, but not all that were in the prison.—*D. D. Whedon.* **Unto all . . . in his house**—Apparently either in the large room of the prison, or in the court-yard; certainly the members of his household, and possibly the other prisoners, were auditors with him.—*L. Abbott.*

33. **Washed their stripes**—He washed and cleansed them from their stripes; that is, from the blood caused by their stripes, with which they were covered.—*Albany.* **Was baptized**—With regard to the method of the baptism, we insert notes from different writers giving the two opposite views. The following is Dr. Whedon's: "It can hardly be supposed that so many persons should be successively *immersed* at midnight in the same well, fountain, or tank. Nor could they all have gone down to the river, for Paul's message to the magistrates (verse 37) clearly implies that he had not left the prison limits." "The rite may have been performed," says De Wette, "in the same fountain or tank in which the jailer had washed them." "Perhaps the water," says Meyer, "was in the court of the house; and the baptism was that of immersion which formed an essential part of the symbolism of the act." (See Rom. 6. 3, *seq.*) Ancient houses, as usually built, inclosed a rectangular reservoir or basin (the *impluvium*, so-called) for receiving the rain, which flowed from the slightly inclined roof. Some suggest that they may have used a swimming bath, found within the walls of the prison. Such a bath was

a common appurtenance of houses and public edifices among the Greeks and Romans.—*L. Abbott.* **He and all his**—The most important feature of the subject [of the baptism of the households of Lydia and the jailer] is not connected with the questions whether there were children in those families, or what their ages may have been. It is rather the indisputable fact, that in both cases *the whole household*, or all who belonged to the families, were baptized with the respective heads, which is here of a decisive character. It involves the conception of a *Christian family*, a Christian household. Personal self-determination is indeed a lofty privilege; still, it is not consistent with the truth to isolate the individual; the unity of the family in Christ, the consecration of the *household* through grace, the entire subjection of all to one Lord—these seem to us to be here required by the will of God.—*Lechler.*

34. **He set meat**—Literally, he *set a table*. The night which began in woe ended in rejoicing.—*L. Abbott.* **Believing in God**—The expression *believing in God* could only be used of a converted *heathen*, not of a *Jew*; in chap. 18. 8, of a *Jew*, we have "*believed [on] the Lord*,"—*Alford.* The evidence he gave of the reality of his conversion: by listening to the word of the Lord spoken by his prisoners; by accepting baptism at their hands; by releasing them from prison and the stocks, and making them his guests; all of which was done at the hazard of his office, if not of his life.—*L. Abbott.*

35, 36. **The magistrates**—[On their title, *prators*, see notes, Lesson VI, verse 22.] They had formerly acted in the excitement of the moment, under the influence of popular commotion, and that on reflection they found that they had acted rashly and illegally; and therefore they thought it the wisest course to hush up the mat-

## Authorized Version.

trates sent the serjeants, saying, let those men go.

36 And the keeper of the prison told this saying to Paul. The magistrates have sent to let you go: now therefore depart, and go in peace.

37 But Paul said unto them, They have beaten us openly uncondemned, <sup>9</sup>being Ro'mans, and have cast us into prison; and now do they thrust us out privily? nay verily; <sup>10</sup>but let them come themselves and fetch us out.

38 And the serjeants told these words to the magistrates: and they feared, when they heard that they were Ro'mans.

## Revised Version.

trates sent the <sup>5</sup>serjeants, saying,

36 Let those men go. And the jailor reported the words to Paul, *saying*, the <sup>6</sup>magistrates have sent to let you go: now therefore come forth, and go in peace. But Paul said unto them, They have beaten us publicly, uncondemned, men that are Ro'mans, and have cast us into prison; and do they now cast us out privily? nay verily; but let them come themselves and bring us out. And the <sup>7</sup>serjeants reported these words unto the <sup>8</sup>magistrates: and they feared, when they heard that they were Ro'mans;

<sup>9</sup> Chap. 22, 25.—<sup>10</sup> Psa. 37, 6; Micah 7, 9, 10; Matt. 10, 16.

<sup>5</sup> Gr. *licitors*.—<sup>6</sup> Gr. *prators*.—<sup>7</sup> Gr. *licitors*.—<sup>8</sup> Gr. *prators*.

ter as quietly as possible.—*Gloag*. **Serjeants**—Literally, *rod-bearers*, sheriffs, or constables, who performed judicial orders, called by the Romans *licitors*. The provincial *licitors* carried a bundle of rods as their ensign of office; the licitors at Rome bore rods and axes, implements of scourging and beheading.—*Whedon*. They would probably be the very officers who had inflicted the stripes.—*Plumptre*. **Those men**—Words indicative not so much of *contempt*, as some suppose, as of an awkward feeling of having two unwelcome cases on their hands. Their course had broken the Roman law, and degraded their own Roman official dignity. They wish the past undone and their victims well away.—*Whedon*. **Go in peace**—A common, here a Christian, salutation. The jailer accepts the message with joy, and anticipates its acceptance by Paul. To him it seems a great victory that Paul should be released; the manner of the release he does not consider.—*L. Abbott*. **Paul said unto them**—Namely, to the licitors. **Openly** [Rev. Ver., *publicly*] **uncondemned**—Paul here accuses the *prators* of two violations of the law; they had beaten those who were uncondemned, (Acts 25. 16;) and they had beaten those who were Roman citizens.—*Gloag*. **Being Romans**—Silas also must have been a Roman citizen, which accounts for the Roman form of his name, Silvanus. Paul was free-born. See chap. 22. 28.—*Jacobson*. The privilege of Roman citizenship was not so uncommon among the Jews as some suppose. It is frequently adverted to by Josephus; he mentions those who were by birth Jews, and yet were Romans, and that even of the equestrian order, (*Bell.*, Jud. ii. 14, 9).—*Gloag*. **Do they thrust us out privily**—They had been publicly scourged and im-

prisoned; if, therefore, they had departed without a public declaration of their innocence, a stain would have rested on their reputation, and thus the cause of the Gospel would have been injured. Besides, such a public declaration of the illegality of their punishment on the part of the magistrates would undoubtedly encourage the new converts, and at the same time shield them from popular violence.—*Gloag*. **Fetch us out**—Publicly declare our innocence by escorting us. The insisting on this must have convinced the whole city, secured the jailer from suffering in consequence of indulgence shown to prisoners, and raised the public estimation of the new faith.—*Jacobson*.

One of Cicero's orations, that against Verres, who had put a Roman citizen to death without trial, refers frequently to the privilege of citizenship. "It is," says Cicero, "a misdeed to bind a Roman citizen—a crime to scourge him—almost parricide to put him to death." "How often has this exclamation, 'I am a Roman citizen,' brought aid and safety, even among barbarians, in the remotest part of the earth!" "There was a Roman citizen scourged with rods in the marketplace of Messina. In the midst of his pain and the noise of the rods nothing was heard from this wretched man than the words, 'I am a Roman citizen.'"

38. **They feared when they heard**—The Roman law cared little for human rights, but a great deal for the rights of a Roman citizen. The Valerian law exempted the Roman citizen from stripes and tortures until an appeal to the people was decided; the Porcian law absolutely forbade the infliction of stripes upon a Roman. The violation of these laws rendered the magistrate liable to indictment for treason, the penalty being death and the confiscation of his property.

## Authorized Version.

39 And they came and besought them, and brought *them* out, <sup>11</sup> and desired *them* to depart out of the city.

40 And they went out of the prison, and entered into *the house of* Lyd'i-a: and when they had seen the brethren, they <sup>12</sup> comforted them, and departed.

<sup>11</sup> Matt. 8, 34.—<sup>12</sup> Luke 22, 32; 1 Thess. 3, 2, 3; 4, 18, 5, 11, 14.

—*L. Abbott.* In the year 44 Claudius had deprived the Rhodians of their privileges because some Roman citizens had been put to death by them.—*Jacobson.*

39. They came and besought them—The word so rendered is the same one translated *comforted* in the next verse. They used fair words to atone for a foul deed; they were now as obsequious as they had been tyrannical.—*L. Abbott.* And brought [Rev. Ver., *And when they had brought them out they asked them.*]—To depart out of the city lest there should be any further disturbance among the people.—*Gloag.*

40. Entered into the house of Lydia—As if to show by this leisurely proceeding that they had not been made to leave, but were at full liberty to consult their own convenience.—*D. Brown.* Notice, too, Lydia's courage and faithfulness in receiving the men whose presence might create another disturbance and injure her own business. Seen the brethren—Lydia's house appears to have been the meeting-place of the brethren as well as the lodging of the apostle and his party.—*Plumptre.* Departed—Though many circumstances might have invited their continuance at Philippi, yet, from respect to the authorities, they comply with the request of the *prætors*, and depart.—*Gloag.* The narrative here passes into the third person. Luke remained at Philippi, probably to confirm the faith of the converts, and rejoined the apostles at Troas, chap. 20. 6, after an interval of seven years, according to a calculation followed by Cook and Plumptre.—*W. Jacobson.*

## Authorities to be Consulted.

See on Lesson VI, and the following: Homiletical Monthly, iii, 185. Preacher's Lantern, i, 699. Freeman's Manners and Customs, 806, 839, 840, 841. Sermons, by T. Halyburton, The Convicted Sinner's Case and Cure; J. C. Hare, The Jailer at Philippi; C. G. Finney, The Condition of Being Saved; C. Spurgeon, (Series 7,) The King's Highway Opened; Leonard Bacon, What it is to Be-

## Revised Version.

39 and they came and besought them; and when they had brought them out, they asked them to go away 10 from the city. And they went out of the prison, and entered into *the house of* Lyd'i-a: and when they had seen the brethren, they <sup>9</sup> comforted them, and departed.

<sup>9</sup> Or, *exhorted.*

come a Christian. Foster's Cyclopedia of Illustrations, [numbers marked with a star refer to poetical illustrations.] ver. 25-40: \*3562; 25: 4693; 28: 2681; 29-31: \*3556; 30; 4093, 7567; 31: 2122, 12074; 33: 5176.

## Practical Thoughts.

## [THE WAY OF SALVATION.]

1. The example of disciples, in joyful endurance of trial, influences many to seek salvation. Ver. 25.

2. The events of God's providence, bringing men suddenly face to face with death, powerfully awaken them to their need of salvation. Vers. 26, 27.

3. One whose conscience is aroused by the word and the Spirit is eager to find the way of salvation. Ver. 30.

4. The way of salvation is by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Ver. 31.

5. The salvation of the head of a household leads often to that of his family. Vers. 31, 32.

6. Salvation requires that the saved man shall openly renounce the world, and ally himself to Christ by baptism. Ver. 33.

7. Salvation opens the heart, and turns men from cruelty to kindness. Ver. 35.

## Sermon Outline.

FIRST.—Public introduction of the lesson by giving plainly, and very briefly, its history.

SECOND.—An exegetical reading of it to the congregation.

THIRD.—Impress its incidental purpose.

a. No hour of the day is devotionally inopportune.

b. "Natural phenomena" are in reality methods or instrumentalities of Divine administration.

c. Prayer wonderfully triumphant.

d. In the simplicity of devout trust in God is greater safety than in the wisdom and fleetness of flight.

e. The faithfulness of the omnipresent Spirit, according to the Master's recent assurance in convicting of sin.

f. The first thought of a convicted and converted

sinner is for the spiritual safety of his best beloved.

*g.* Christian conversion is at once shown by Christian confession in ecclesiastical ordinance and personal tenderness.

*h.* The disposition of human nature to dismiss what it cannot manage.

*i.* The defiant boldness of consciously loyal and righteous citizenship.

FOURTH.—Dwell with all clearness, eloquence, learning, beauty, and fervor upon the primary purpose of the lesson, "What must I do to be saved?"

FIFTH.—Reflecting upon this primary purpose, it may be observed,

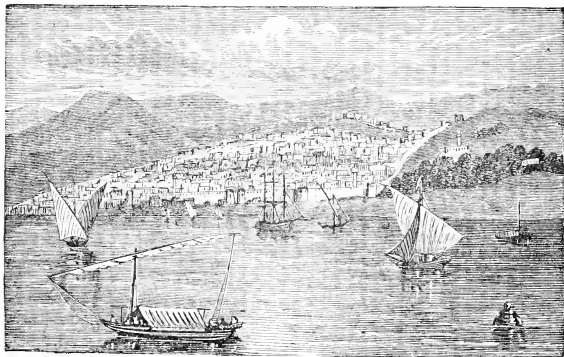
*a.* Manifestly one cannot "believe" on the Lord Jesus Christ unless he *knows* him, and God's chosen, if not exclusive, method of informing men of their Saviour is through his word.

*b.* One reason why so few comparatively "believe" on the Lord Jesus Christ is that, not knowing him through his word, they have nothing to "believe" concerning him, and they *will not* come to his word and learn of him.

*c.* An earnest, devout seeker after the truth, and every human being may be such a seeker, cannot form the acquaintance of Jesus Christ in his word without "believing" on him.

*d.* No man can "believe" on the Lord Jesus Christ without at once experiencing that transformation of character we call the "new birth," by which he is placed on the right side of every issue in morals to the extent of his information.

*e.* Many try to "believe" on the Lord Jesus Christ without knowing him through his word, and in consequence ever deplore a want of convincing and compensating experience.



Thessalonica.

A. D. 52.]

LESSON VIII.

[Feb. 24.

THESSALONIANS AND BEREANS.—Acts 17. 1-14.

**GOLDEN TEXT.**—These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so.—ACTS 17. 11.

**TIME.**—A. D. 52, immediately following the events of the last lesson. For rulers, see Lesson I.

**PLACES.**—Thessalonica and Berea, both in Macedonia. See Descriptive Index.

**INTRODUCTION.** *The City of Thessalonica.*—No city on the great Ignatian Way surpassed Thessalonica in importance. Under its ancient name of Therna it was the passage-way of the great army of Xerxes in his invasion of Greece. It received its new name, Thessalonica, from a sister of Alexander the Great, on being rebuilt by her husband, and this name it still retains in the abbreviated form of Saloniki. The apostle found it the most populous city of Macedonia, and, until the founding of Constanti-



nople, it was virtually the capital of northern, if not of entire, Greece.—*D. D. Whedon.* Here Cicero had spent his days of melancholy exile. Here a triumphal arch, still standing, commemorates the victory of Octavianus and Antony at Philippi. From hence, as with the blast of a trumpet, not only in Paul's days, but for centuries afterward, the word of God sounded forth among the neighboring tribes. Here Theodosius was guilty of that cruel massacre for which St. Ambrose, with heroic faithfulness, kept him for eight months from the cathedral of Milan. Here its good and learned Bishop Eustathius wrote those *scholia* on Homer which place him in the first rank of ancient commentators. It received the title of "the orthodox city" because it was for centuries a bulwark of Christendom, but it was taken by Amurath II. in 1431.—*Farrar.* Paul apparently still desires to preach the Gospel first to his own nation, and is driven by the providence of God from the Jew to the Gentile. Thus he passes through Amphipolis and Apollonia, where, we may presume, there was no Jewish synagogue; preaches at Thessalonica to the Jews; driven thence by the mob, preaches in the synagogue at Berea; and not till he is driven from that city comes to Athens, the center of Grecian philosophy and idolatry.—*L. Abbott.*

## Authorized Version.

1 Now when they had passed through Amphip'o-lis and Ap-ol-lo'ni-a, they came to Thes-sa-lo-ni'ca, where was a synagogue of the Jews;

2 And Paul, as his manner was, went <sup>1</sup> in unto them, and three sabbath days

<sup>1</sup> Luke 4. 16; chap. 9. 20; 13. 5, 14; 14. 1; 16. 13; 19. 8.

1. When they had passed through—Our apostle leaving Luke at Philippi, banished but



triumphant, attended by Silas and Timothy, takes the high Ignatian road westward. In accordance with his plan, rather to plant the Gospel in the greater capitals of the world, he rapidly passed the lesser towns of Amphipolis and Apollonia, lying on the great way.—*D. D. Whedon.* The apostle now understood the wide extent of the field in which he was called to labor. The movement is westward throughout, bringing him nearer to the capital of the world.—*W. Jacobson.* **Amphipolis**—About 23 miles from Philippi, to the south-west, had its name from the river Strymon flowing almost around it. It was originally called Nine Ways, because the roads north and south converged in its site. The Romans made it a free city and the capital of the first of the four districts into which they divided Macedonia.—*W. Jacobson.* **Apollonia**—There were several places of this name, of which three were in the province of Macedonia. The Apollonia through which Paul now passed was a colony of the Corinthians in the district of Mygdonia. Pliny, iv, 7. It was a place of

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17 Now when they had passed through Amphip'o-lis and Ap-ol-lo'ni-a, they came to Thes-sa-lo-ni'ca, where was a synagogue of the Jews; and Paul, as his custom was, went in unto them, and for three <sup>1</sup>sabbath days

<sup>1</sup> 10r. weeks.

small importance, and must not be confounded with a much more celebrated Apollonia in Blyrian Macedonia, near Dyrrhachium. Its situation is uncertain; some identify it with Klisali, a modern post-station, and others with a village called Pollina.—*Gloag.* **Came to Thessalonica** [See Introduction to the lesson.]—We see at once how appropriate a place it was for one of the starting points of the Gospel in Europe, and can appreciate the force of what Paul said to the Thessalonians within a few months of his departure from them: "From you the word of the Lord sounded forth like a trumpet, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but in every place." 1 Thess. 1. 8.—*Horsoun.* **Where was a synagogue**—This signifies that it was the chief, is not the only, synagogue of the district. At Philippi there was no synagogue, but only a *proseucha*; and probably this was also the case with Amphipolis and Apollonia. Thessalonica, being a large commercial city, would be much frequented by Jews. In the present day there is no town in Europe which has such a large proportion of Jews. They are said to amount to 25,000, or nearly one half of the population, and to have no fewer than 26 synagogues.—*Gloag.*

2. **As his manner was**—As elsewhere making the first offer of the Gospel to the Jews. chap. 9. 20; 13. 5; 14. 1. **Went in unto them**—Paul's own account in his Epistles to the Thessalonians interestingly reveals what his *entrance* was after he had been *shamefully entreated at Philippi*. He used no *flattering words*, no *cloak of coetousness*. *Laboring night and day*, prob-

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reasoned with them out of the Scriptures;

3 Opening and alleging<sup>2</sup> that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead; and that this Je'sus, <sup>a</sup>whom I preach unto you, is Christ.

4 And <sup>3</sup>some of them believed, and consorted with Paul <sup>4</sup>and Si'las; and of the devout Greeks a great multitude, and of the chief women not a few.

<sup>2</sup> Luke 24. 28, 46; chap. 18. 28; Gal. 3. 1.—<sup>a</sup> Or, whom, said he, I preach.—<sup>3</sup> Chap. 28. 24.—<sup>4</sup> Chap. 15. 22, 27, 32, 40.

ably at his handicraft of tent-making, he refused to be *chargeable unto any*. *Holyly, and justly, and unblamably* living himself, he could enjoin holy living upon others with a boundless authority.—*Whedon*. **Three sabbath days**—Perhaps Paul preached for three successive Sabbaths in the synagogue, but finding the Jews obstinate he desisted and turned to the Gentiles, for the epistles give evidence of a longer stay. **Reasoned**—The tense implies that, on both occasions, the argument was resumed and continued. Discussion was allowed in synagogues. Matt. 12. 10; Luke 4. 21-24; John 6. 59.—*Jacobson*. **Out of the Scriptures**—What we read of as occurring in the Pisidian Antioch (chap. 13. 14, 15) was, we may believe, now reproduced. That he was allowed to preach for three Sabbaths in succession shows the respect commanded by his character as a rabbi, and, it may be, by his earnest eloquence.—*E. H. Plumptre*.

**3. Opening and alleging**—The latter word is used in the sense of bringing forward proofs, and the two words imply an argument from the prophecies of the Messiah, like in kind to that at the Pisidian Antioch. In the intervals between the Sabbaths, the apostle worked, as usual, for his livelihood; probably, of course, as a tent-maker. 2 Thess. 3. 8.—*Plumptre*. **That Christ must needs have suffered** [Rev. Ver., *That it behoved the Christ to suffer, and to rise again.*]—Unfolding two great points in order; namely, there was, according to *the Scriptures*, to be a suffering, dying, and risen Messiah; and, second, that our Jesus has perfectly filled out that prophetic idea, so that *Jesus* is truly the long-expected Christ—Messiah. To the Jews a *glorious* Messiah was far more welcome than a *suffering*. A conquering Messiah is, indeed, far more copiously described by the prophets, but a suffering Messiah is shadowed by the entire system of piacular sacrifices.—*Whedon*. **Jesus . . .**

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reasoned with them from the script-

3 ures, opening and alleging, that it behoved the Christ to suffer, and to rise again from the dead; and that this Je'sus, whom, *said he*, I proclaim

4 unto you, is the Christ. And some of them were persuaded, and consorted with Paul and Si'las; and of the devout Greeks a great multitude, and 5 of the chief women not a few. But

is **Christ**—The meaning is obvious; the person Jesus is the Messiah who, according to the Scriptures, was to suffer and rise again.—*Gloag*.

The Old Testament he treated as a nut. He broke the shell, opened out the kernel, and presented it as food to the hungry. The Jews were like little children who had a fruit-tree in their garden, their father's legacy. The children had gathered the nuts as they grew, and laid them up with reverence in a store-house; but they knew not how to break open the shell, and so reach the kernel for food. Paul acts the part of elder brother to these little ones. He skillfully pierces the crust and extracts the fruit, and divides it among them.—*Arnot*.

**4. Some of them believed**—Some, that is, of the synagogue worshippers; mainly the proselytes, not the Hebrews by birth. **Consorted with Paul and Silas**—Cast in their lot with Paul and Silas; not only accepted theoretically their interpretation of prophecy, but practically adopted the Christian life with all the dangers which such a course entailed.—*L. Abbott*. **The devout Greeks**—These were Gentiles, who, tired of idolatry, had adopted the worship of Jehovah, and attended the services of the synagogue; but had not received circumcision as proselytes to the Jewish Church. They were called "proselytes of the gate," *i. e.*, those without the door of the Church. **Chief women**—In every age, women have been interested in religion more numerously than men. And in the Roman world, wherever there was a synagogue, were found many women, especially those of the higher classes, who regularly attended the services, and were recognized as worshippers of God. Many of them became proselytes, and from their zeal in the Jewish faith exercised great influence. The women worshipped in the synagogue in a latticed gallery, where they could see and hear, but remain unseen.

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5 But the Jews which believed not, moved with envy, took unto them certain lewd fellows of the baser sort, and gathered a company, and set all the city on an uproar, and assaulted the house of Ja'son, and sought to bring them out to the people.

6 And when they found them not, they drew Ja'son and certain brethren unto the rulers of the city, crying, These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also;

7 Whom Ja'son hath received: and

\* Rom. 16, 21.—\* 1 Kings 18, 17; chap. 16, 20.

5. **Moved with envy** [Rev. Ver., *jealousy*.]—At seeing the adherence of persons of rank becoming Christians, by which the Jewish influence was undermined.—*Whedon*. **Certain lewd fellows of the baser sort** [Rev. Ver., *Vile fellows of the rabble*.]—Literally, *of men out of the markets, or loungers in the forum*; such persons as are every-where known to be the scum of the population.—*Alford*. Owing to the dishonor in which manual pursuits were held in ancient days, every large city had a superfluous population of worthless idlers—clients who lived on the doles of the wealthy, flatterers who fawned at the feet of the influential, the *lazaroni* of streets, mere loafers and loiterers, the hangers-on of forum, the *clauquers* of law-courts, the scum that gathered about the shallowest outmost waves of civilization.—*Farrar*. **Assaulted the house of Jason**—With whom the apostle and his companions were staying as guests. He has been identified with Jason, mentioned in Rom. 16. 21, whom Paul calls one of his kinsmen. If so, he must have removed to Corinth, from which city the Epistle to the Romans was written. The name, however, was common, so that such an identification is extremely doubtful; and, as a general rule, all such identifications are to be discountenanced.—*Gloag*. **To bring them out to the people**—Thessalonica was a free Greek city, and the Jews accordingly, in the first instance, intended to bring the matter before the popular *ecclesia*, or assembly.—*Plumptre*.

Observe the unscrupulousness of religious animosity. The Jews invite the co-operation of the heathens, and of the lowest class of the heathens; they throw the whole city into tumult; they present what they know to be a false charge; they apostatize from their own faith in repudiating a Messiah, and demanding the punishment of one of their own nation for preaching that kingdom of

## Revised Version.

the Jews, being moved with jealousy, took unto them certain vile fellows of the rabble, and gathering a crowd, set the city on an uproar; and assaulting the house of Ja'son, they sought to bring them forth to the people.

6 And when they found them not, they dragged Ja'son and certain brethren before the rulers of the city, crying, These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also;

7 whom Ja'son hath received: and these

2 Gr. *the inhabited earth*.

God which was, and still is, the stay and hope of the devout Jew in his exile.—*L. Abbott*.

6, 7. **Found them not**—Probably, anticipating the mob, Paul and his attendants withdrew to some other house. **The rulers of the city**—Literally, "to the politarchs." It is to be observed that the chief magistrates of Thessalonica are here called by a title different from that of the chief magistrates of Philippi, and this difference corresponds with the different characters of the cities. Philippi was a Roman colony, (*colonia*), and hence its magistrates resembled those at Rome, and were called *prætores, duumviri*, whereas Thessalonica was not a Roman colony, but a "free city," (*urbs libera*), and was governed by its own rulers, and hence its chief magistrates were called politarchs, *city rulers*. It is a very remarkable and striking coincidence that this rare word is seen to this day on an inscription upon an arch at Thessalonica. There the names of the politarchs of Thessalonica are mentioned, seven in number, thus proving the extreme accuracy of Luke in using this term to denote the magistrates of that city. The arch is by competent antiquarians thought to have been built in commemoration of the victory of Philippi, and if so, was standing when Paul was at Thessalonica.—*Gloag*. **Turned the world upside down**—Their exaggerated statement respecting Paul and Silas, in the introduction to their charge against Jason and the rest, affords striking evidence of the wide-spread and deep impression made by the Gospel in the few years of Paul's ministry.—*J. G. Butler*. There is more truth in this hyperbole than they suppose. The world is wrong side up, and needs to be turned *upside down* to be brought right side up.—*Whedon*. **Whom Jason hath received**—Paul and Silas were, it seems, his guests. Possibly the converts assem-

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these all <sup>7</sup> contrary to the decrees of Cæ'sar, saying <sup>8</sup> that there is another king, *one Je'sus*.

8 And they troubled the people and the rulers of the city, when they heard these things.

9 And when they had taken security of Ja'son, and of the other, they let them go.

10 And <sup>9</sup> the brethren immediately sent away Paul and Si'las by night unto Be-re'a: who coming *thither* went into the synagogue of the Jews.

11 These were more noble than those in Thes-sa-lo-ni'ca, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind,

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all act contrary to the decrees of Cæ'sar, saying that there is another king, *one Je'sus*. And they troubled

8 the multitude and the rulers of the city, when they heard these things.

9 And when they had taken security from Ja'son and the rest, they let them go.

10 And the brethren immediately sent away Paul and Si'las by night unto Be-ræ'a: who when they were come thither went into the synagogue

11 of the Jews. Now these were more noble than those in Thes-sa-lo-ni'ca, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, examining the

<sup>7</sup> Ezra 4, 12; Dan. 3, 12.—<sup>8</sup> Luke 23, 2; John 19, 12; 1 Peter 2, 15.—<sup>9</sup> Chap. 9, 25.

bled for worship in his house.—*Jacobson*. **Contrary to the decrees of Cesar**—The emperor at Rome, ruling over all the world. **There is another king**—This charge here corresponds to that presented before Pilate against Jesus. Luke 23, 2; John 19, 12. Not improbably the report of that accusation had reached the Jews at Thessalonica, and was borrowed by them for this occasion. Some color was given to it by the peculiar character of Paul's preaching at Thessalonica, in which Christ's kingly character, second advent, and final kingdom upon the earth appear to have been prominent.—*L. Abbott*. It is not improbable that the title Lord, so frequently given by Christians to their great Master, may have given occasion to such a charge.—*Gloag*.

8, 9. **They troubled the people**—The politicians feared a tumult, the people feared the Romans.—*Kuinoel*. **And the rulers**—The accusation was artfully made; it was one into which it behooved the city rulers to inquire; whereas, if the Jews had accused them merely of disturbing their mode of worship, the complaint would probably not have been listened to.—*Gloag*. **Taken security**—That there should be no violation of the public peace, and that those persons who had been alleged as the cause of this disturbance should quit the city.—*Neander*. **Jason, and of the other**—It is clear from 1 Thess. 1, 6; 2, 14, that Paul and Silas were not the only sufferers. The Gentile converts were exposed alike to the violence of their own countrymen and to the malice of the Jews.—*Plumptre*. **They let them go**—The conduct of the magistrates of Thessalonica appears in a favorable light when compared with that of the

magistrates of Philippi in similar circumstances.—*Gloag*.

10. **The brethren . . . sent away**—Although Paul and Silas were not compelled to depart, yet the safety of the Christians at Thessalonica, who had become surety for them, would be endangered by their presence, as the disturbance might be renewed by the Jewish faction.—*Gloag*. **Paul and Silas**—Timotheus apparently remained behind, partly to help the Thessalonian converts under their present trials, partly to be able to bring word to Paul as to their condition.—*Plumptre*. **Unto Berea**—Its former name was Pheræa, but pronounced by the Macedonians Berea, afterward it was called Irenopolis, "the city of peace." Little noticed by ancient writers, it does not appear to have been a place of much consequence. It is now a town of the second rank in European Turkey, containing a population of about 20,000, and is known by its most ancient name, Pheræa, corrupted into Verria, or Kara-Verria.—*Gloag*. **Into the synagogue**—The worship of believers in God and in the Scripture every-where paved the way to instruction in the faith of Christ.

11. **These were more noble**—The word for noble (literally, *well-born*, as in 1 Cor. 1, 26) had, like most words of like origin, a wide latitude of meaning. Here it stands for the generous, loyal temper which was ideally supposed to characterize those of noble origin.—*Plumptre*. **They received the word**—One of the very few instances of Paul being well received by his countrymen, for whose spiritual welfare he yearned so earnestly. Rom. 9, 3.—*Jacobson*. **Readiness of mind**—A willingness to consider, and, if true, to receive it. Observe, their readi-

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and searched <sup>10</sup> the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so.

12 Therefore many of them believed; also of honourable women which were Greeks, and of men, not a few.

13 But when the Jews of Thes-sa-lo-ni'ca had knowledge that the word of God was preached of Paul at Be-ro'a, <sup>11</sup> they came thither also, and stirred up the people.

14 And <sup>12</sup> then immediately the brethren sent away Paul, to go as it were to

<sup>10</sup> Isa. 34. 16; Luke 16. 29; John 5. 39.—<sup>11</sup> Luke 11. 52; 1 Thess. 5. 15.—<sup>12</sup> Matt. 10. 23.

ness was not that of a superstitious credulity, as that of the Lycaonians, (chap. 14. 11,) for they searched the Scriptures daily to see whether these things were so. They illustrate Paul's directions to the Thessalonians. 1 Thess. 5. 21.—*L. Abbott*. **Searched the Scriptures**—They compared what Paul said with the Scriptures of the Old Testament, and especially the life and sufferings of Jesus with the words of the prophets; and, seeing the correspondence, they came to the conclusion that this Jesus whom Paul preached unto them was the Messiah.—*Gloag*. These two qualities are distinct from each other, and yet are so bound together as to constitute a pair. The one is a tender, child-like receptiveness for revealed truth; the other is a manly independence of judgment. Their hearts drank in readily the water of life; but their understandings sifted the doctrines that were preached, and tried them by the law and the testimony.—*Arnol*. **These things**—Namely, the doctrine of verse 3, which Paul and Silas preached here also.—*Alford*.

The Berean converts have naturally been regarded, especially among those who urge the duty, or claim the right, of private judgment, as a representative instance of the right relations of reason and faith, occupying a middle position between credulity and skepticism, to be reproduced, *mutatis mutandis*, according to the different aspects which each presents in successive ages.—*Plumptre*.

12. **Many of them believed**—These were not, as some think, Hellenistic Jews, but partly proselytes and devout Gentiles who heard Paul preach in the synagogue, and partly heathens converted to Christianity by the more private discourses of the apostle.—*Gloag*. **Honorable women**—Women belonging to the higher classes, as in verse 4. [Rev. Ver., *Greek women of honorable estate*.] **Greeks**—Greek prose-

## Revised Version.

12 scriptures daily, whether these things were so. Many of them therefore believed; also of the Greek women of honourable estate, and of men, 13 not a few. But when the Jews of Thes-sa-lo-ni'ca had knowledge that the word of God was proclaimed of Paul at Be-ra'a also, they came thither likewise, stirring up and 14 troubling the multitudes. And then immediately the brethren sent forth Paul to go as far as to the sea: and

lytes; heathens would not have searched the Jewish Scriptures for evidence of Paul's message.—*L. Abbott*.

The most prominent and invariable cause of infidelity is found in the fact that men will not investigate the Scriptures. Many infidels have confessed that they had never carefully read the New Testament. Thomas Paine confessed that he wrote the first part of the "Age of Reason" without having a Bible at hand, and without its being possible to procure one where he then was, (in Paris.) "I had," says he, "neither Bible nor Testament to refer to, though I was writing against both; nor could I procure any."—*Barnes*.

13. **The Jews . . . came thither**—Believers seldom labor with as much zeal for the truth as the ungodly exhibit in opposing it; for the path of the latter leads upward, and is difficult; that of the latter descends, and is easy.—*Quesnel*. **Stirred up**—In the original a strong word, figurative of the action of a storm upon the sea. 1 Thess. 2. 15, has been thought to refer to this action of the Jews. They were numerous and influential in Berea.—*Jacobson*.

14. **Sent away Paul**—Paul would gladly have now returned to visit his dear Thessalonian Church, but "Satan," instigating his Jewish foes, "hindered" him, and he diverges still farther to the south-east.—*Whedon*. **To go as it were to the sea** [Rev. Ver., *as far as to the sea*]:—The English version conveys the impression that the movement was a feint in order to baffle the pursuers. Many of the better MSS., however, give "as far as the sea;" and this is, probably, the meaning even of the reading followed by the Authorized Version. The absence of any mention of places between Berea and Athens (as, *e. g.*, Amphipolis and Apollonia are mentioned in verse 1) is presumptive evidence that Paul actually traveled by sea, and, rounding the promontory of Sunium, entered Athens by

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the sea: but Si'las and Ti-mo'the-us abode there still.

the Piræus.—*Plumptre*. The distance between Berea and Athens by land is 250 Roman miles, and would have occupied about twelve days; whereas three days would have sufficed for the voyage by sea; and it is natural to suppose that Paul would take the most expeditious mode of traveling.—*Gloag*. Silas and Timotheus remain to cherish the infant Church. Yet a charge is left for them to follow, as soon as may be, the apostle to Athens. This they failed to do. Paul had to stand up single and alone in Athens, but was joined by Silas and Timothy at Corinth. Chap. 18. 5.—*Whedon*.

## Authorities to be Consulted.

See on Lesson I, and Farrar, chap. xxvi. Conybeare and Howson, chap. ix. Lesson Helps for 1877, Third Quarter. Monday Club, 1877, p. 290. Sermons by C. Spurgeon, (Series 5,) The World turned Upside Down; Talmage, Revelation; J. B. Romeyn, The Example of the Bereans; Dr. Emmons, The Right of Private Judgment. Foster's Cyclopaedia of Illustrations, [numbers marked with a star refer to poetical illustrations,] ver. 2: \*240, 349; 3: 655, 663, \*3233; 5: 11533; 6: 24, 8383; 11: \*247, 6812.

## Practical Thoughts.

## [HELPS TO THE GOSPEL.]

1. The worship on the Sabbath has ever been found a help to the Gospel, by its opportunity of preaching the truth to thoughtful and worshipping people. Vers. 1, 2.
2. The Scriptures of the Old Testament give help to the Gospel by their foreshadowings of Jesus as the Messiah. Vers. 2, 3.
3. The story of the Saviour's life, death, and resurrection is a mighty help to the Gospel, by inspiring conviction of its truth. Ver. 3.
4. Association with the disciples of Jesus helps the progress of the Gospel, by its examples and instruction. Ver. 4.
5. The patient endurance of trial helps the Gospel, by showing faith and love triumphant over all obstacles, and winning hearts. Vers. 5-9.
6. The patient search of the Scriptures ever proves a help to the Gospel, resulting in well-grounded faith. Vers. 11, 12.

## Sermon Outline.

Thessalonica and Berea were two neighboring cities. Their people were almost identical in race and civilization. In both of them there were col-

## Revised Version.

Si'las and Tim'o-thy abode there still.

onies of Jews, possessing synagogues and sustaining the worship of the God of their fathers, and obedient to the Mosaic rites and ceremonies. They were alike in the possession of the Old Testament Scriptures, which they reverently regarded as the revealed will of God.

Paul, in the course of his ministry, found himself in the city of Thessalonica. The doors of the Jewish synagogue were opened to him, and, as was his custom, he commenced to preach the Gospel.

He rehearsed the facts in connection with the life, sufferings, and resurrection of Christ, and proved from the Old Testament Scriptures that all the prophecies concerning the promised and long-expected Messiah had found their complete fulfillment in Jesus of Nazareth. A few of the Jews and many of the Greeks, and among them some of the prominent people of the city, accepted the apostle's demonstration and believed in Christ.

The unbelieving Jews excited a storm of persecution, and Paul was driven from the city.

Leaving Thessalonica, he fled to Berea, and, under almost precisely the same circumstances as at the former place, he preached Christ in the synagogue of the Berean Jews. The text says of them that "they were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily whether those things were so."

It is not an impossible thing to know the truth; especially is this the case in regard to the fundamental principles of the Gospel, since they are either historical or experimental.

The Bereans constitute a type of thinkers and investigators worthy of all commendation. The spirit and action of the Bereans has given them a most enviable fame.

Their name is borne to-day by one of the grandest and most remarkable movements in the religious and intellectual activity of modern times.

The Thessalonians constitute a type of thinkers unworthy of imitation. They refused to listen; they would not investigate; they answered reason and argument with physical abuse and persecution. They are the prototypes of papal inquisition and modern infidels.

The Gospel, the history of redemption, the plan of salvation, the demonstration of Jesus' Messiahship, the offer of life on the simple conditions of repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus—this was the message proclaimed by Paul to both Thessalonians and Bereans. The first took no pains to investigate the claims of the Gospel, nor to examine the foundations upon which those claims rested. The latter were willing and anxious to do both. Four things prevent men seeking after the truth:

- a. The natural perversity of the unregenerate

[Continued on page 310.]

A. D. 52.]

LESSON IX.

[March 2.

PAUL AT ATHENS.—Acts 17. 22-34.

**GOLDEN TEXT.**—In him we live, and move, and have our being.—Acts 17. 28.

**TIME.**—A. D. 52. For rulers, see Lesson I.

**PLACE.**—Athens in Greece. See Descriptive Index.

**CONNECTING LINKS.**—(1) Paul's journey to Athens. Acts 17. 15. (2) Paul's discussions with the Athenians. Acts 17. 16-21.

**INTRODUCTION.**—Sailing from Dium, the apostle would look a regretful farewell upon the distant mountain tops of Thessalonica; and, more near, the snowy Mount Olympus, the mythical home of the Homeric gods, would recede from sight. He would sail by Thermopylae, where Leonidas, with his three hundred, died for Grecian liberty; and Marathon, where Miltiades repelled the invading Persian. Finally, after probably about three days' sail, he sweeps round into the Piræus, the celebrated harbor of Athens, and debarks to visit her streets. To the cultured mind few passages in the history of the Church are more interesting or full of suggestions than this contact-point between Christianity and classicism.—*D. D. Whedon. Paul on Mars Hill.*—The remarkable speech which follows can only be fully understood by taking into consideration the position in which Paul was placed. His audience consisted of the wise and learned of Athens—the philosophers of the Grecian schools. He takes as his text the inscription on an altar which he saw, "To an Unknown God;" and from this he proclaims the true God as the Creator and Preserver of the world, and of all things therein. Surrounded with splendid temples, he asserts the folly of thinking that the Godhead resides in temples made with hands; and pointing to those magnificent statues in his immediate neighborhood, he exclaims, "We ought not to think that the Godhead is like to gold, or silver, or stone, to an image of art, or the device of a man." And having thus asserted the majesty of God, and man's dependence upon him—the great truths of natural religion—he proceeds to the message with which he was peculiarly intrusted, the call to repentance, the future judgment, and the resurrection, when he is interrupted, and his speech left unfinished.—*Gloag.*

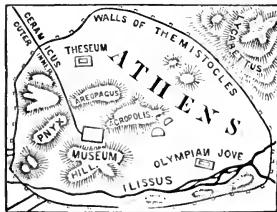


Authorized Version.

22 Then Paul stood in the midst of Mars' hill, and said, Ye men of Ath'ens, I perceive that in all things ye are <sup>1</sup>too superstitious.

<sup>1</sup> Or, the court of the Areopagites. —<sup>1</sup> Jer. 50. 38.

22. In the midst of Mars Hill [Rev. Ver., *the Areopagus*.]—The Areopagus, or Mars Hill, was a rocky eminence to the west of the Acrop-



olis. It was so called from the legend of the trial of Mars for the murder of the son of Neptune. It is much lower than the Acropolis,

Revised Version.

22 And Paul stood in the midst of the A-re-op'a-gus, and said, Ye men of Ath'ens, in all things I perceive that ye are somewhat <sup>1</sup>su-

<sup>1</sup> Or, religious.

being only sixty feet above the valley. This was the meeting-place of the illustrious Senate of Athens, who were in consequence called Areopagites. They sat in the open air, and their stone seats may still be discerned on the Areopagus. The court was composed of the noblest and most virtuous men in Athens. Although the city had now lost, in a great measure, its independence, yet being a free city, it was governed by its own laws; so that under the Romans the council of the Areopagus was still a constituted court, invested with considerable powers. It was before this court that Socrates was tried and condemned.—*Gloag.* Ye men of Athens—The usual form of address employed by their orators.—*Gloag.* Ye are too superstitious (Rev. Ver., *somewhat superstitious*).—*Carrying your religious reverence very far; an instance of which follows, in that they, not con-*

## Authorized Version.

23 For as I passed by, and beheld your <sup>b</sup>devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, <sup>2</sup>TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you.

24 God <sup>3</sup>that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is <sup>4</sup>Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth <sup>5</sup>not in temples made with hands;

<sup>b</sup> Or, god; that ye worship; <sup>2</sup> Thess. 2. 4.—<sup>3</sup> Eph. 2. 12.—<sup>4</sup> Chap. 14. 15.—<sup>5</sup> Matt. 11. 25.—<sup>6</sup> Chap. 7. 48.

tent with worshiping named and known gods, worshiped even an unknown one. Blame is neither expressed, nor even implied; but their exceeding veneration for religion laid hold of as a fact, on which Paul, with exquisite skill, engrafs his proof that he is introducing no new gods, but enlightening them with regard to an object of worship on which they were confessedly in the dark.—*Aiford*. The Scriptures here recognize a certain religionism of the heathen as something good; and if, in our overpowering zeal, we are not willing to acknowledge this, the full force of this discourse of Paul must be hidden from us.—*Stier*.

23. **As I passed by** [Rev. Ver., *passed along*] and beheld your devotions [Rev. Ver., *observed the objects of your worship*].—*Your sacred things*; not, as in our version, “your devotions.” The word denotes all objects of their worship—their temples, altars, and images.—*Gloag*. **An altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD** (Rev. Ver., *an unknown god*).—That there was at least one altar at Athens with this inscription would appear historically certain from this passage itself, even though other testimonies were wanting, since Paul appeals to a fact of his own observation, and that, too, in the presence of the Athenians themselves.—*Meyer*. We are told that there were at Athens altars erected to unknown gods. Thus, Philostratus says, *At Athens, where are built altars to unknown gods*. And Pausanias says, in his description of Attica, that altars of unknown gods were in the Phalerie harbor of Athens. The language does not unequivocally decide whether each single altar was devoted to a single unknown god, or to several, or all. But, first, we learn by these passages, at any rate, that the Athenians did erect altars to unknown divine powers; and, second, we may then fairly allow the apostle’s word to decide for the singular.—*Whedon*. **Whom therefore** [Rev. Ver., *Whom therefore ye worship in ignorance, this set I forth*

## Revised Version.

23 perstitious. For as I passed along, and observed the objects of your worship, I found also an altar with this inscription, <sup>2</sup>TO AN UNKNOWN GOD. What therefore ye worship in ignorance, this set I forth unto you.

24 The God that made the world and all things therein, he, being Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in

25 <sup>3</sup>temples made with hands; neither

<sup>2</sup> Or, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD.—<sup>3</sup> Or, sanctuaries.

unto you.]—Paul does not exactly identify the true God with the unknown god to whom the altar was inscribed; but draws the inference that the Athenians, besides the known gods, recognized something divine to be worshiped which was different from them. And justly might Paul make this application: Ye worship an unknown god; ye thus acknowledge that there is a divinity whom you know not; now such a divinity do I declare to you.—*Gloag*.

Paul acted upon the tittle of rectitude, the mere shadow of a shade of truth, that he found among the Athenians. He viewed their devotions before he attempted to reform their principles, and though, in all he saw, he saw but one object which was not wretchedly wrong, he passed by the accumulated heaps of error to make a gentle and conciliatory use of that solitary atom of a better element. You see, too, he had acquainted himself with what was good in their poets, and seizes the opportunity of meeting them on their common ground. Let the zealous Protestants of this day act only toward their fellow Christians as Paul acted, in this celebrated instance, toward Pagans.—*A. Knor*.

24. **God** [Rev. Ver., *The God*].—A personal being, not a blind force or law of nature; not the sum total of nature’s laws personified; but One who exists independently of nature.—*Whedon*. Paul begins with the foundation; he does not preach Christ crucified as a Redeemer till he has preached the one only God as Creator.—*L. Abbott*. **That made the world**—In a single sentence he sets forth the fundamental tenet of the Christian religion, in contrast with Epicureanism, which taught that there was no God, and that the world was only a happy accident; with Stoicism, which taught that the world was God and God the world; and with popular mythology, which believed in as many gods or goddesses as domains in nature or political divisions in the state.—*L. Abbott*. No wonder that the devil, in order to diffuse idolatry, has blotted out among all heathen nations the recognition



Authorized Version.

25 Neither is worshipped with men's hands, <sup>6</sup> as though he needed any thing, seeing <sup>7</sup> he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things;

26 And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and <sup>8</sup> hath determined the times before appointed, and <sup>9</sup> the bounds of their habitation;

27 That <sup>10</sup> they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and

<sup>6</sup> Psa. 50, 8. — <sup>7</sup> Num. 16, 22; Isa. 42, 5; Dan 4, 35. Rom. 11, 36. — <sup>8</sup> Deut. 30, 20; Job. 14, 5. — <sup>9</sup> Deut. 32, 8. — <sup>10</sup> Rom. 1, 20.

of Creation. The true doctrine of creation is the proper refutation of all idolatry.—*Ross.*

25. Neither is worshiped [Rev. Ver., *serve*] with men's hands—Not *worshiped*, the Greek will not bear this meaning, and the declaration so rendered is not true. On the contrary, he calls for *worship* from men's hands. Psa. 29. 2; 89. 7; Isa. 56. 6, 7; Hab. 2. 20; John 4. 23; 1 Tim. 2. 8; Heb. 12. 28. But this worship is not *service*, in it God serves us; we do not serve him. The heathens brought costly offerings, and food and drink, supposing that the gods consumed them; this idea of the dependence of God on men, the reversal of the truth, and one common to all heathen and heathenish systems, Paul disclaims and disproves. Comp. Psa. 50. 9-15.—*L. Abbott.* As though he needed any thing—A fatal blow at the whole system of pagan rituals, which assumed that its sacrifices and incense gratified the appetites and senses of the human-like deities.—*Whedon.* Seeing he [Rev. Ver., *he himself*] giveth—The fact that *all* comes from God, and is constantly preserved by God, is a sufficient evidence that we cannot *serve* him by giving any thing to him. Comp. 1 Chron. 29. 14.—*L. Abbott.*

It is very true that idols need the services which human hands can render; there are, indeed, workshops to be found in the cities of India and China, the signs of which bear the inscription, "Here old gods are repaired, and new ones made."—*Lechler.*

26. Hath made of one blood—Paul introduces this remark in opposition to the polytheism of the heathen, who regarded the different nations as derived from different sources, and as consequently under the superintendence of different divinities.—*Gloag.* Hath determined the times before appointed [Rev. Ver., *Their appointed seasons.*]—In assigning to the nations their respective abodes, he hath fixed

Revised Version.

is he served by men's hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he himself giveth to all life, and breath, and

26 all things; and he made of one every nation of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, having determined *their* appointed seasons, and the 27 bounds of their habitation; that they should seek God, if haply they might feel after him, and find him,

both the *seasons* of their prosperity and the limits of their territory, that is, it was he who decided *when* and *how long* they should flourish, and *how far* their dominion should extend. We have the same idea exactly in Job 12. 23.—*Hackett.* Bounds of their habitation—The special gifts of character of each race—Hebrew, thoughts of God; Greek, sense of beauty; and Roman, sense of law; and Teutonic, truthfulness; and Keltic, impulsiveness; and Negro, docility—have all their special work to do. All local circumstances of soil and climate that influence character come under the head of the "bounds of men's habitation." All conditions of time—the period at which each race has been called to play its part in the drama of the world's history—comes under the head of the "appointed seasons."—*Plumptre.*

If we would trace our descents we should find all slaves to come from princes, and all princes from slaves.—*Seneca.*

If all the leading variations of the human family sprang originally from a single pair, a doctrine against which there seems to be no sound objection, a much greater lapse of time is required for the slow and gradual formation of races, such as the Caucasian, Mongolian, and Negro, than is embraced in any of the popular systems of chronology.—Sir Charles Lyell, *Principles of Geology*, p. 660.

27. That they should seek the Lord—The whole object of the divine Providence, in his dealings with nations as well as with individuals, is to bring them to a knowledge of the one true God. This is the declaration of the apostles, that it has important bearings on the Christian conception of national life, and one peculiarly applicable to our own times, is apparent. They might feel after him—As a blind man gropes for some object which he is unable to see. How the heathen became so blinded that they must thus *grobe* after God,

## Authorized Version.

find him, <sup>11</sup> though he be not far from every one of us:

28 For <sup>12</sup> in him we live, and move, and have our being; <sup>13</sup> as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring.

29 Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, <sup>14</sup> we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device.

## Revised Version.

though he is not far from each

28 one of us: for in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain even of your own poets have said,

29 For we are also his offspring. Being then the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and device of man.

<sup>4</sup> Or, that which is divine.

<sup>11</sup> 1 Kings 8, 27; Jer. 23, 24.—<sup>12</sup> Col. 1, 17; Heb. 1, 3.—  
<sup>13</sup> Titus 1, 12.—<sup>14</sup> Isa. 40, 18.

see Rom. 1, 21.—*L. Abbott.* Though he be not far—Better, *And yet he is not far.* The speaker appeals, as he does in Rom. 2, 15, to the witness borne by man's consciousness and conscience. There, in the depths of each man's being, not in temples made with hands, men might find God and hold communion with him.—*Plumptre.* He is hard to find, not because he withdraws from us, but because we withdraw from him. Our iniquities separate us from him.—*L. Abbott.*

28. For in him—We are surrounded by his pervading Spirit as by an atmosphere; yet, contrary to pantheism, distinct from him.—*Whedon.* We live, and move, and have our being—Better, *We live, and are moved, and are.* Each of the verbs used has a definite philosophical significance. The first points to our animal life; the second—from which is derived the Greek word used by ethical writers for passions, such as fear, love, hate, and the like—not, as the English verb suggests, to man's power of bodily motion in space, but to our emotional nature; the third, to that which constitutes our true essential being, the intellect and will of man. What the words express is not merely the Omnipresence of the Deity; they tell us that the power for every act and sensation and thought comes from him.—*Plumptre.* As certain also of your own poets—Observe that Paul does not quote the Bible, but a heathen poet; he quotes as an authority that which his audience will accept as such. Contrast his course in the synagogue at Antioch (chap. 13) where his whole address is based on Scripture.—*L. Abbott.* For we are also his offspring—The quotation has a special interest as being taken from a poet who was a countryman of Paul's. Aratus, probably of Tarsus, (about B. C. 272,) had written a didactic poem under the title of *Phænomena*, comprising the main facts of astronomical and meteorological science as then

known. It opens with an invocation to Zeus, which contains the words that Paul quotes. Like words are found in a hymn to Zeus by Cleanthes, B. C. 300. Both passages are worth quoting:

From Zeus begin we; never let us leave  
His name unloved. With him, with Zeus, are  
filled.

All paths we tread, and all the marts of men,  
Filled, too, the sea, and every creek and bay;  
And all in all things need we help of Zeus,  
For we, too, are his offspring.

—ARATUS, *Phænom.*, 1-5.

Most glorious of immortals, many-named,  
Almighty and forever, thee, O Zeus,  
Sovran o'er nature, guiding with thy hand  
All things that are, we greet with praises.  
Thee

'Tis meet that mortals call with one accord.  
For we thine offspring are, and we alone  
Of all that live and move upon this earth,  
Receive the gift of imitative speech.

—CLEANTHES, *Hymn to Zeus.*

—*Plumptre.*

29. Forasmuch then—If we are God's offspring our conception of him should mount upward from what is highest in ourselves, from our moral and spiritual nature, instead of passing downward to that which, being the creature of our hands, is below us.—*Plumptre.* The Godhead—In the original a vague, philosophic term used, we may presume, by Paul in consideration of the habit of thought of his hearers.—*Jacobson.* Gold, or silver, or stone—The first word reminds us of the lavish use of gold in the colossal statue of Zeus by Phidias. Silver was less commonly used, but the shrines of Artemis at Ephesus supply an instance of it. "Stone" was the term commonly applied to the marble of Pentelicus, which was so lavishly employed in the sculpture and architecture of Athens.—*Plumptre.*

## Authorized Version.

30 And <sup>16</sup> the times of this ignorance God winked at; but <sup>16</sup> now commandeth all men every-where to repent:

31 Because he hath appointed a day, in the which <sup>17</sup> he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; *whereof* he hath <sup>c</sup> given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.

32 And when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked; and others said, We will hear thee again of this matter.

<sup>16</sup> Rom. 3. 25.—<sup>16</sup> Luke 24. 47.—<sup>17</sup> Rom. 2. 16.—<sup>c</sup> Or, offered faith; 1 Cor. 15.

Observe that it applies to all use of images for the purpose of bringing God near to the soul through the imagination. This is the reason given for their use in the Romish Church to-day; the truth is, however, that the Godhead is not like to such images, and this is equally true of art representations of Christ, since what is adorable in him is not the fleshly form, (2 Cor. 5. 16,) but the inward, impalpable spirit.—*L. Abbott.*

30. This ignorance — The ignorance expressed in verse 23, and exemplified in the idolatrous scene around him. — *Whedon.* He calls those times wherein Christ was unknown to them, *the times of their ignorance.* Though the stars shine never so bright, and the moon with them in its full, yet they do not, altogether, make it day! still it is night till the sun appear. — *Archbishop Leighton.* **God winked at** [Rev. Ver., *overlooked.*]—That is, did not appear to take notice of them by sending express messages to them as he formerly did to the Jews, or did not observe them with a view to punishment: God, in his mercy, passed them by.—*Gloag.* **But now**—The proclamation of the Gospel terminates the period of excusable ignorance. Knowledge, to whomsoever it comes, creates new obligations and destroys ancient excuses.—*D. D. Whedon.* **All men every-where** [Rev. Ver., *Commandeth men that they should every-where.*]—Thus emphatically asserting the universal character of Christianity. **To repent**—To change their mind and their views, to renounce their idolatries. The command saith, “*Now repent.*” The imperative hath no future tense.—*Gurnall.*

31. **He hath appointed a day**—The language certainly implies a definite and fixed occasion of judgment in the future. It is hardly consistent with the idea of a continuous judgment before which the souls of the dying appear

## Revised Version.

30 The times of ignorance therefore God overlooked; but now he <sup>b</sup> commandeth men that they should all every-where repent: inasmuch as he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge <sup>c</sup> the world in righteousness <sup>d</sup> by <sup>e</sup> the man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.

32 Now when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked; but others said, We will hear thee concerning this yet again. Thus

<sup>b</sup> Some ancient authorities read *decalareth to men.*—<sup>c</sup> Gr. *the inhabited earth.*—<sup>d</sup> Gr. *in.*—<sup>e</sup> Or, *a man.*

immediately upon death, and certainly not with the idea of a gradual development in the future life, carried on in all alike, from the stage attained by the discipline of earth.—*L. Abbott.* **Judge the world**—Aptly is this uttered on the Areopagus, the seat of judgment.—*Bengel.* **In righteousness**—With an absolutely just judgment and a righteous sentence for every man. **That man**—Crowning the scheme of human history is this judgment-day, at which *man*, the image and offspring of God, is by *man* to be judged. **Whom he hath ordained**—As the God of all ages has appointed the day, so he, the God of all notions, hath ordained the man. **Raised him from the dead**—That a common man should be raised from the dead is not credible, for God would not do such a thing. But that a wonderful man, an exceptional man, a miraculous man, the race-born Son of man, ordained by God and set forth by him, should be raised, is credible. And when God has done such a thing, then he furnishes men good reason to believe when he declares that the man raised from the dead will judge the world in righteousness.—*Whedon.*

32. **When they heard of the resurrection**—Whenever Paul spoke of the resurrection he was interrupted, and thus his speech remained unfinished. He had not as yet even named Jesus, but had directed attention to his person; and evidently, had he been allowed to proceed, he would have discoursed upon his life and sufferings.—*Gloag.* **Some mocked; and others said**—If we be permitted to distinguish between these two parties, we would refer the “some who mocked” to the Epicureans, and the others who deferred the further hearing of the apostle to the Stoics, but there are not sufficient grounds for this distinction. **We will hear**

## Authorized Version.

33 So Paul departed from among them.

34 Howbeit <sup>18</sup> certain men clave unto him, and believed: among the which was Di-o-ny'si-us the Ar-e-op'a-gite, and a woman named Dam'a-ris, and others with them.

<sup>18</sup> Rom. 11. 5.

thee again.—The words contain merely a polite dismissal, although those who spoke them might for the time be impressed, perhaps feeling that there was some truth in what Paul said. —*Glouy.*

33. **From among them**—From the assembly on Mars Hill. His departure from the city is expressly noticed in the first verse of the following chapters, and, Paley remarks, there is no hint of his quitting Athens sooner than he had intended.—*Jacobson.* He went from the midst of them sorry, it may be, for their jeers, seeing through their spiritual incapacity, but conscious that in that city his public work, at least, was over. He could brave opposition; he was discouraged by indifference.—*Farrar.*

34. **Certain men clave unto him**—But evidently an inconsiderable number. Luke has no pompous falsehoods to tell us. Paul was despised and ridiculed, and he does not for a moment attempt to represent it otherwise; Paul's speech, so far as any immediate effects were concerned, was an all but total failure, and Luke does not conceal its ineffectiveness. He shows us that the apostle was exposed to the ridicule of indifferentism, no less than to the persecutions of exasperated bigotry.—*Farrar.*

**Dionysius the Areopagite**—A member of the high council at whose place of meeting Paul had spoken. Nothing is known concerning him. **Damaris**—Nothing else is known of her; there is no adequate reason for the conjecture that she was the wife of Dionysius.—*L. Abbott.* **Certain others with them**—Though the immediate effect of the apostle's sermon was not great the Parthenon in time became a Christian church. Athens ceased to be "a city full of idols," and the repugnance of the Greeks to images became so great as to be a principal cause of the schism between the Churches of the East and West in the eighth century.—*Humphrey.*

The forms of unbelief have changed; their essential spirit and character are unchanged. Stoicism answers to modern pantheism, the doctrine that God is all and all is God; Epicureanism answers to modern materialism, the doctrine

## Revised Version.

Paul went out from among them.

34 But certain men clave unto him, and believed: among whom also was Di-o-ny'si-us the Ar-e-op'a-gite, and a woman named Dam'a-ris and others with them.

that there is no spirit, nothing but a mode of motion; the inscription to the unknown God represents the aspirations which, in a different form, still express themselves in the writings of those who declare the Deity to be the unknown and the unknowable. Paul's treatment of the skepticism of Athens is equally applicable to the parallel skepticism of our own times. We are to recognize it as a fact; to unhesitatingly attack it; to treat it as a genuine conviction with respect, and yet as a spiritual blindness that is a sin to be repented of, and we are to meet it, not by arguments drawn from Scripture, whose authority it does not recognize, nor by preaching the higher doctrines of Christianity—the incarnation, atonement, and second coming of Christ—but by appealing to the inner consciousness of men witnessed in and by themselves, and by laying the foundation, in demonstrating the truth of theism, for a demonstration of the truth of Christianity.—*L. Abbott.*

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## Practical Thoughts.

[THE GOSPEL REVELATION OF GOD.]

1. The Gospel recognizes every longing of the human heart after God, and sees the truth

underlying the errors of paganism. Vers. 22, 23.

2. The Gospel brings to the human heart a knowledge of the God whom it worships even in its ignorance. Ver. 23.

3. The Gospel reveals God as the one creator and author of nature, which arose, not by chance, but by the fiat of the Almighty. Ver. 24.

4. The Gospel reveals God as a spiritual being. Lord of all, and every-where present. Ver. 24.

5. The Gospel reveals God as in direct personal relation with men, giving us all blessings. Ver. 25.

6. The Gospel reveals God, not as a being far off apart from us, but as one who is near us, responsive to our yearnings after him. Ver. 27.

7. The Gospel reveals God as the Father of mankind, bringing us into the privilege of sonship with the Almighty. Vers. 28, 29.

8. The Gospel reveals God manifest in the flesh in the person of his Son, the Saviour and the Judge of all mankind. Ver. 31.

#### Sermon Outline.

BY REV. C. W. CUSHING, D.D.

Paul with his co-laborers, Silas and Timotheus, had just planted the second and third Christian Churches in Europe at Thessalonica and Berea. From both these places they were driven by the persecutions of the Jews, though Silas and Timotheus had remained at Berea, and only Paul had actually been sent away. Alone he departs to offer Christ to the cultured Athenians, though this seems not to have entered into his plans. The three days' voyage was alongside historic ground, calculated to charge the nerve and knot the muscle of one like Paul. Here was Thermopylae, where Leonidas and his brave three hundred gave their lives for Grecian liberty; and here, too, was Marathon, where Miltiades bent back the Persian foe. Arrived at Athens, entering the city from the Piræus, "the spirit of Paul is stirred in him" as he sees the almost numberless images of rare beauty which meet his eye at every turn. Idolatry stared him in the face every-where. With such an environment Paul could not be silent. He disputed with the Jews in the synagogues. Then he encountered the philosophers, both Epicureans and Stoics. The former were atheists, the latter, pantheists. Both were ignorant of the true God, and had no faith in a future existence. They were, therefore, at open war with the Gospel which Paul had come to preach. Either the existence of one supreme God, or the truth of the doctrine of the resurrection, would annihilate all their theories at a stroke. But these men were philosophers who prided themselves upon argument, and their dignity would not allow them to thrust aside one who came to meet them with

argument. So they courteously brought Paul to Areopagus, or, more correctly and literally, to the hill of Mars. Strictly, the Areopagus was the highest court of Athens, and it was held on this hill. Tradition says it was called hill of Mars because the god Mars was tried here before all the gods for the murder of Halirrhothius, the son of Neptune.

There is no evidence that Paul was brought before the court of Areopagus, though one of its judges at least was present and converted. Acts 17. 34.

Paul had been disputing daily in the market or Agora in the valley below. Now these philosophers invite him to this Athenian forum, opposite the Acropolis, while they occupy the seats of the judges, and the multitudes stand about. On this sublime height, elevated sixty feet on a broad plateau, with no roof but the overarching sky, Paul stands in one of the most eventful moments of his life. Before him was the bold summit of the Acropolis crowned with the famous Parthenon, itself surmounted by the colossal statue of Athene, (or Minerva,) goddess of wisdom and war, and protector alike of the philosophy, art, and religion of Athens. Below him was city of temples, altars, theaters, and statues, works of art unsurpassed. With such surroundings, and in the presence of an audience of cultured idolaters, Paul began his discourse. Every word was in keeping with the place, and evinced dignity and broadest culture. His first declaration was the gleaming of a two-edged sword: "I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious;" literally, too deity-fearing, too religious. You have *too many* objects of worship, "For as I passed by and beheld your devotions"—better, your objects of devotion, your temples, your altars, etc., as I beheld so many objects and evidences of worship—"I found an altar to the unknown god." The pagans had many gods, and often did not know to which to appeal. So here was an altar to an unknown god. There is the best authority for believing this literally true. Diogenes Sarrtius says that six hundred years B. C. the people had been delivered from a terrible pestilence by sacrificing to the god who had power to deliver them, not knowing his name. So they had erected altars to this unknown god. Nor was this an uncommon confession, even among the most enlightened heathens. Horace prays, *O decorum quicquid, in celo regit*—"O whichever of the gods rules in the sky."

Taking advantage of this public, standing confession of their ignorance, Paul says, "What ye ignorantly worship that I make known to you." I am here to tell you what this God is, and who he is. "This God made the heavens and the earth." This was a deadly thrust at pantheism, if true. Proceeding, he says, this God, "seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with men's hands." He is not a part of the universe, and hence needing shelter as you teach.

*He made it all!* "He is not worshiped with men's hands," does not need their help, their offerings, etc. A fatal blow at pagan sacrifices. He needs nothing from us. The rather we receive all things from him. All nations came from him, and ought, therefore, to be subject to him. These gifts were bestowed on them that they might be led to seek him. For, though apparently hidden, "he is not far from every one of us," for we live, move, and have our being in him." Subsistence, action, and existence itself are all from him. Even your own great poets, at least two of them, Aratus and Cleanthes, have said, "We also are his offspring." If this be true, if we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold or silver or stone graven by art or man's device." And yet, on every side of them were temples filled with these idols of gold, silver, and stone. How, says Paul, can we be the offspring of such lifeless, senseless things?

He declares there were times when God overlooked such ignorance. But there is no apology for it now. In the concentrated light of their time "he commands all men to repent." The coming of Christ into the world removes all ground for excuse, and he will finally judge all men on this basis by Christ whom he hath raised from the dead.

This reference to the resurrection of Christ and the future state aroused both Epicureans and

Stoics, for they believed in neither. Some of them lost their dignity and mocked, while others retired by saying, "We will hear thee again upon this matter."

This was Paul's only visit to Athens, but he had assaulted the fortress at its strongest point, and made breaches in the walls. Moreover, he had planted under the walls seeds full of persistent vitality which must ultimately topple them over. Whether he regarded it as a defeat or victory we do not know. We only know that some were converted, among whom was Dionysius the Areopagite; that ultimately the Parthenon became a Christian temple, and that idolatry came to be very repugnant to the Greeks. It is but reasonable to suppose that this bold and conclusive discourse of Paul must have had much to do in bringing about that result.

We may learn from this, not to be bewildered by the achievements of the wicked, nor intimidated by their dignity or attainments.

We may learn, too, how to present truth, adapt it to the character of the hearers. Paul did not denounce them or their works. He seized upon the most natural way of approach to his audience; then, in the light of their own admissions, showed the inconsistency of their conclusions. His most effectual weapons were from the arsenal of the enemy. This is the perfection of argument.

A. D. 50.]

## LESSON X.

[March 9.

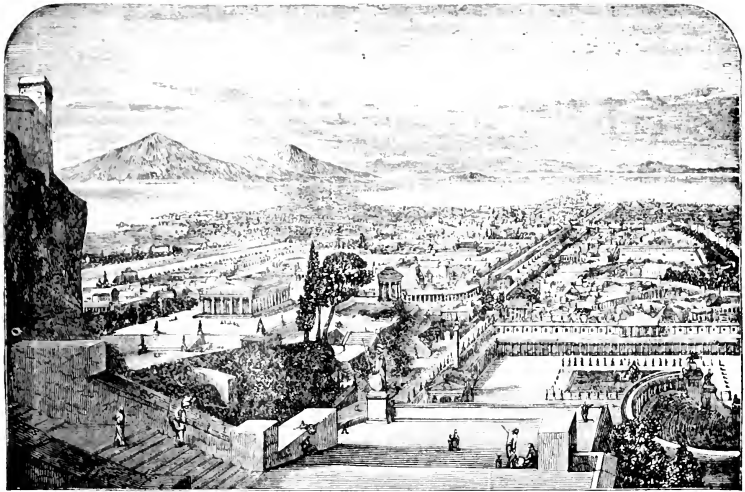
PAUL AT CORINTH.—Acts 18. 1-17.

**GOLDEN TEXT.**—I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee, to hurt thee, for I have much people in this city.—ACTS 18. 1-17.

**TIME.**—A. D. 52, immediately following the events of the last lesson. For rulers, see Lesson I.

**PLACE.**—Corinth in Greece. See Descriptive Index.

**INTRODUCTION.**—Corinth was situated on the Isthmus, between the two parts of Greece known as Helles and Peloponnesus. It had been destroyed about 300 years before, but rebuilt, and was now the capital of the Greek province, and, more than Athens, the center of Greek life. It was the largest city in Greece, and, from its commercial relations, inhabited by a diverse population. Its military center was the Acro-Corinthus, a rocky height strongly fortified, in the middle of the town. It was the Paris of the ancient world, devoted to pleasure, and so notorious for profligacy that "to Corinthianize" was a current term for the practice of licentiousness. *The coming of Paul to Corinth.*—It was to Corinth, with its mongrel and heterogeneous population of Greek adventurers and Roman bourgeois, with a tainting infusion of Phœnicians—this mass of Jews, ex-soldiers, philosophers, merchants, sailors, freedmen, slaves, trades-people, hucksters, and agents of every form of vice—a colony "without aristocracy, without tradition, without well-established citizens"—that the toll-worn Jewish wanderer made his way. He entered it as he had entered Athens—a stricken and lonely worker; but here he was lost even more entirely in the low and careless crowd. Yet this was the city from which and to whose inhabitants he was to write those memorable letters which were to influence the latest history of the world. How little we understand what is going on around us! How little did the wealthy magnates of Corinth suspect that the main historic significance of their city during this epoch would be centered in the disputes conducted in a petty synagogue, and the thoughts written in a tent-maker's cell by that bent and weary Jew, so solitary and so wretched, so stained with the dust of travel, so worn with the attacks of sickness and persecution! How true it is that the living world often knows nothing of its greatest men!—*Farrar.*



View of Corinth Restored.

Authorized Version.

1 After these things Paul departed from Ath'ens, and came to Cor'inth;

2 And found a certain Jew named Aq'ui-la, born in Pon'tus, lately come from It'a-ly, with his wife Pris-cil'la;

11 1 cor. 16. 19; 2 Tim. 4. 19

Revised Version.

18 After these things he departed from Ath'ens, and came to Cor'inth.

2 And he found a certain Jew named Aq'ui-la, a man of Pon'tus by race, lately come from It'a-ly, with his wife

1. After these things—The events of the last lesson. Departed from Athens—We have no grounds for determining the length of Paul's stay at Athens.

Some have assigned only a fortnight, others have seen reason to extend it to three months. He had intended to await the arrival of Silas and Timothy,

(chap. 17. 16.) but they did not rejoin him till he was at Corinth. He left Athens, not under any pressure of persecution, but because his teaching found no acceptance there. Though one and again near Athens in his third missionary circuit, he did not revisit it.—W. Jacob-



son. Came to Corinth—The journey may have been either by land, along the Isthmus of Corinth, or by sea, from the Piræus to Cenchrea. —E. H. Plumptre.

How great is the mercy of God! Nineveh, Sodom, Corinth—no city is so corrupt that he does not send preachers of righteousness to the people.—Starke.

2. Aquila—A Roman name, assumed, according to custom, signifying eagle; in fact, both aquila and eagle are different shapes of the same primitive word. Pontus—A province bordering on the Euxine Sea, where, induced by advantages of trade, the Jews were numerous. Priscilla—Also a Roman name, which was strictly Prisca, (2 Tim. 4. 19,) signifying antique. As in our day it is the fancy to use in feminine names the pet termination ie, (as Lizzie for Elizabeth, and Carrie for Caroline,) the Romans used the

## Authorized Version.

(because that Clau'di-us had commanded all Jews to depart from Rome:) and came unto them.

3 And because he was of the same craft, he abode with them, and wrought: for by their occupation they were tent-makers.

21 Cor. 4. 12; 1 Thess. 2. 9.

more euphonious termination *illa*. So Terentia, Prima, Prisca, became Terentilla, Primilla, Priscilla.—*Whedon*. It appears that Priscilla was a woman of marked ability, being not only mentioned as sharing in the hospitality of the family, but also in the theological instruction of Apollos. From the fact that her name is always mentioned first it has been inferred that she was the more energetic of the two, but it is a fact worthy of note that the two are always mentioned together, from which we may conclude that they furnish a happy example of harmony and sympathy in Christian life.—*L. Abbott*. **Claudius**—Fourth Roman emperor; his full name was Tiberius Claudius Nero Drusus Germanicus. He was called from a quiet and obscure life to succeed Caligula, A. D. 41. He had been considered from childhood lacking in intellect, the natural irresoluteness of his character had been increased by contemptuous treatment from his relatives, and harshness and cruelty from servants. The evil wrought during his reign is ascribed to others rather than to him, and he is said to have been good and honest.—*L. Abbott*. **All Jews to depart from Rome**—The historian, Suetonius, says that Claudius drove the Jews from Rome because they were incessantly raising tumults at the instigation of a certain Chrestus. Chrestus was a common name, Christus was not; the two were often used interchangeably; the pronunciation was the same, or nearly so; hence the surmise is not unreasonable that Christianity had already reached Rome at this time; that the Jews instigated riots against their Christian brethren, as in other places in the Roman Empire—Corinth, (verse 12; Berea, (chap. 17. 13;) Thessalonica, (chap. 17. 5;) Iconium, (chap. 14. 19;) Antioch in Pisidia, (chap. 13. 50;) and that Suetonius, who wrote half a century after the event, which he dismisses in a sentence, formed the impression that this Christus, or Chrestus, was somehow responsible for the outbreaks, and, therefore, represented him as their instigator. The decree, whatever it was, did not remain long in force, for we find Aquila not long after in Rome,

## Revised Version.

Pris-cil'la, because Clau'di-us had commanded all the Jews to depart from

3 Rome: and he came unto them; and because he was of the same trade, he abode with them, and they wrought; for by trade they were tent-makers.

(Rom. 16. 3,) and many Jews resident there. Chap. 28. 15.—*L. Abbott*. **Came unto them**—The question arises, whether Aquila was already a believer in Christ, or was at this time led by Paul to faith in the Gospel. The former was probably the case, for the following reasons: (1) There is no mention of their listening to Paul, and believing, as, *e. g.*, in the case of Lydia, (chap. 16. 14;) and it is hardly conceivable that Luke, who relates that ease so fully, would have omitted a fact of such importance. (2) Paul joins himself to them, as able to share his thoughts and hopes even before he began preaching in the synagogue, as in verse 4. (5) An unbelieving Jew was not likely to have admitted Paul into a partnership in his business.—*E. H. Plumptre*.

**3. He abode with them**—Dwelling at their home, and perhaps in partnership with their business. **Tent-makers**—The general opinion now is, that Paul was a maker of tents from the "cilicium," or hair-cloth of Cilician goats. If it be objected that he would hardly find the raw material for this work in cities far from Cilicia, it may be answered that this would not be required in the fabrication of tents from the hair-cloth, which, doubtless, itself, would be an article of commerce in the markets of Greece. Chrysostom calls Paul, sometimes, a *leather-cutter*, imagining that the tents were made of leather.—*Alford*. Tent-making constitutes an important occupation in Western Asia at the present day. In all the larger cities, and particularly at Constantinople, there is a portion of the bazaar, or business part of the town, entirely devoted to this branch of industry. Here may be seen men engaged in cutting and sewing canvas, in constructing or finishing off tents of various forms and sizes, in mending and repairing those long used, or packing them up for their customers.—*Van Lennep*.

The preacher of the Gospel and the tent-maker are not two distinct persons, but one and the same; in a higher and lower sphere, animated by the same principle, and with the question on his lips, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?"—*Van Oosterzee*.

Let none be ashamed who follow a trade; but



Authorized Version.

4 And he reasoned in the synagogue every sabbath, and persuaded the Jews and the Greeks.

5 And <sup>2</sup> when Silas and Ti-mo'the-us were come from Mac-e-do'ni-a, Paul was pressed in <sup>1</sup>the spirit, and testified to the Jews that Je'sus was <sup>a</sup>Christ.

6 And <sup>b</sup> when they opposed themselves, and blasphemed, <sup>c</sup>he shook his raiment, and said unto them, Your <sup>d</sup>blood be upon your own heads; I <sup>e</sup>am

<sup>1</sup> Chap. 17, 14. — <sup>2</sup> Job 32, 18. — <sup>a</sup> Or, is the Christ. — <sup>b</sup> 1 Peter 4, 4. — <sup>c</sup> Matt. 10, 14. — <sup>d</sup> Ezek. 33, 4. — <sup>e</sup> Ezek. 3, 18.

only let those be ashamed who live to no purpose, and are idle. The souls of those who are always at work are purer and stronger; for the idler speaks and does many vain things. But he who labors aright does not easily allow any thing useless, either in work, word, or thought; for his soul is always directed to a life of labor. For we are the disciples of the fishermen, of the publicans, of the tent-makers, of Him who was brought up in the carpenter's house.—*Chrysostom*.

4. Reasoned in the synagogue—Engaged in discussion, proving from the Old Testament that Jesus was the promised Messiah. **Every Sabbath**—Every-where the services of the synagogue formed a starting-point for the Gospel, for those in attendance upon them were already believers in God, familiar with the Scriptures, and devout in spirit, however narrow-minded in their views. **The Jews and the Greeks**—The latter word does not mean Greek-speaking Jews, or proselytes in the full sense of the word, but, as elsewhere, is used for those who were Gentiles by birth, and who, though worshipping in the synagogue, had not accepted circumcision.—*Plumptre*.

*The work of the week, and the sanctification of the sabbath—each requiring and sustaining the other:* (1) The former creates a hunger and thirst for the repose and the nourishment which the latter affords; (2) The latter imparts strength and pleasure in doing the work of the week.—*Gerok*.

5. When Silas and Timotheus were come—Silas from Berea, Timothy from Thessalonica. 1 Thess. 3, 2. It is not necessarily implied that they came together. **From Macedonia**—See Lesson VIII, verse 14. **Paul was pressed in the spirit** [Rev. Ver., *Constrained by the word*.]—The best reading is *to the word, not in the spirit*. The meaning is not perfectly clear. It may indicate (as Alford and Alexander) that Silas and Timothy found Paul

Revised Version.

4 And he reasoned in the synagogue every sabbath, and <sup>1</sup>persuaded Jews and Greeks.

5 But when Silas and Tim'o-thy came down from Mac-e-do'ni-a, Paul was constrained by the word, testifying to the Jews that Je'sus was the Christ.

6 And when they opposed themselves, and <sup>2</sup>blasphemed, he shook out his raiment, and said unto them, Your blood be upon your own heads: I am

<sup>1</sup> Gr. sought to persuade. — <sup>2</sup> Or, railed.

more than usually absorbed in the work of testifying to the Jews, a crisis in the work being imminent, which resulted in their rejection of the word of life;" or it may mean (as Hackett and Robinson) that after they came he gave himself wholly to the word, being relieved by the contribution which they brought him from the Macedonian Churches (2 Cor. 11, 9) from the necessity of devoting a considerable part of his time to manual labor, in order to earn his daily bread.—*L. Abbott*. The word was within him as a constraining power, compelling him to give utterance to it. His "heart was hot within him, and while he was musing the fire kindled." Psa. 39, 4.—*Plumptre*. **Testified to the Jews**—Literally, *Testifying to the Jews the Messiah Jesus*. Not merely, as in our English version, that Jesus was Christ, but the whole truth respecting the life of Jesus, and how his life fulfilled the prophecies of the Old Testament concerning the Messiah. See chap. 13.—*L. Abbott*.

6. **Opposed themselves**—In the original a military term, implying organized and systematic opposition. **Blasphemed**—Chap. 13, 45. Resistance to the truth led on from bad to worse.—*Jacobson*. **Shook his raiment**—A symbol of similar import with shaking off the dust from the feet. (Acts 13, 51,) denoting his entire separation from them—*Glaug*. It was the last resource of one who found appeals to reason and conscience powerless, and was met by brute violence and clamor.—*Plumptre*. **Your blood be on your own heads**—As no blood-guiltiness, in a literal sense, had been here contracted, the words must refer to spiritual self-murder. When these people rejected the life which is in Christ, they became guilty of spiritual suicide.—*Starke*. **I am clean**—"I have done my duty." Observe in this sentence a hint of the motive which led Paul always first to preach to the Jews; because he could not, with a good conscience, go to the Gentiles without first offering the Gospel to his

## Authorized Version.

clean: <sup>9</sup> from henceforth I will go unto the Gen'tiles.

7 And he departed thence, and entered into a certain *man's* house, named Jus'tus, *one* that worshipped God, whose house joined hard to the synagogue.

8 And <sup>10</sup> Cris'pus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his house: and many of the Corinth'i-ans hearing believed, and were baptized.

9 Then <sup>11</sup> spake the Lord to Paul in the night by a vision, Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace:

<sup>9</sup> Chap. 2s. 2s.—<sup>10</sup> 1 Cor. 1. 14.—<sup>11</sup> Isa. 55. 21.

## Revised Version.

clean: from henceforth I will go unto the Gen'tiles. And he departed thence, and went into the house of a certain man named Titus Jus'tus, one that worshipped God, whose house

8 joined hard to the synagogue. And Cris'pus, the ruler of the synagogue, <sup>9</sup> believed in the Lord with all his house; and many of the Corinth'i-ans hearing believed, and were baptized. And the Lord said unto Paul in the night by a vision, Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace:

<sup>8</sup> Gr. *believed the Lord.*

own people.—*L. Abbott.* **Unto the Gentiles**—This repudiation of the Jews was local, limited to Corinth. Elsewhere, after this, Paul strove with all his energy for the conversion of his countrymen.—*Jacobson.*

7. **Thence**—Out of the synagogue, ceasing from this time to attend its services.—*Jacobson.* **Entered into a . . . house**—Not to live, but to preach. The fact that it adjoined the synagogue made it convenient for this purpose.—*L. Abbott.* **Named Justus** [*Rev. Ver., Titus Justus.*]—The description of him as *one that worshiped God*, indicates that he was a heathen proselyte, but not necessarily at this time a Christian, though sympathizing with Paul rather than with his heathen persecutors. Justus evidently was a settled resident in Corinth. The house of a proselyte afforded to both Hebrews and Greeks greater facilities for access to the apostle than any other. The entire numbers of the Corinthian converts were probably small—to be counted rather by scores than by hundreds. This is certain, because otherwise they could not have met in a single room in the small houses of the ancients, nor could they have been all present at common meals. The minute regulations about married women, widows, and virgins seem to show that the female element of the little congregation was large in proportion to the men, and it was even necessary to lay down the rule that women were not to teach or preach among them, though Priscilla and Phœbe had been conspicuous for their services.—*Farrar.*

8. **Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue**—This ruler of the synagogue was the president of its board of elders. From his office it may be presumed that he was a man of learning and high character. His conversion was regarded as of great importance, for Crispus was

one of the very few who received baptism from the hands of Paul. 1 Cor. 1. 14. There was a tradition that he became Bishop of Ægina.—*W. Jacobson.* **With all his house**—The first recorded instance of the conversion of an entire Jewish family. **Many of the Corinthians**—Probably Paul's separation from the synagogue brought matters to a crisis, so that many waverers became avowed disciples. Among the converts we may note Gaius, or Caius, probably a man of higher social position than others, who made his house the meeting-place of the Church, and at Paul's second visit received him as a guest, (Rom. 16. 23,) and the household of Stephanas, who, as "the first-fruits of Achaia," must have been among the earliest converts. 1 Cor. 16. 15. These also Paul baptized himself. 1 Cor. 1. 14, 15. Fortunatus and Achaicus, and Chloe, a prominent female convert, (1 Cor. 1. 11,) with Quartus, and Erastus, the chamberlain of the city, (Rom. 16. 23,) and Epenetus, also among the "first-fruits of Achaia," (Rom. 16. 5,) may also be counted among the disciples made now or soon afterward.—*Plumptre.*

9. **Then spake the Lord**—We observe that these visions were given at several great crises of the apostle's life. He had seen the Lord at his conversion. Chap. 9. 4-6. He had heard the same voice and seen the same form in his trance in the temple at Jerusalem. Chap. 22. 17. Now he saw and heard them once more, at a time when he was subject to fear and depression, and felt keenly the trial of seeming failure and comparative isolation. **By a vision**—That is, by some supernatural appearance to him, though, very possibly, in a dream. **Be not afraid**—Possibly, after so determined and bold a renunciation of the Jews, the apostle suffered a reaction, and doubted whether he had not destroyed

## Authorized Version.

10 For <sup>12</sup> I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee: <sup>13</sup> for I have much people in this city.

11 And he <sup>6</sup> continued *there* a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them.

12 And when Gal'li-o was the deputy of A-cha'ia, the Jews made insurrection with one accord against Paul, and brought him to the judgment seat.

13 Saying, This *fellow* persuadeth

<sup>12</sup> Isa. 41. 10; Jer. 1. 18; Matt. 28. 20; Rom. 8. 31.—<sup>13</sup> 2 Tim. 2. 19.—<sup>6</sup> Sat there.

the hope of further work.—*L. Abbott.* The double form, affirmative and negative, adds emphasis.

10. **I am with thee**—As a helper and comforter the Saviour promises his presence; an assurance more than sufficient to dispel the apostle's anxiety. **No man shall set on thee**—No person shall oppose in such degree as to result in injury. The recollection of his sufferings at Philippi was still fresh in Paul's mind. **I have much people**—There were souls yearning for deliverance, in whom conscience was not dead, and was waiting only for the call to repentance.—*Plumptre.* Divine prescience foresaw who would exercise the power to accept, and styles that class, more or less, by anticipation, the Lord's *people*.—*Whetton.* **In this city**—As our Lord *forewarned* Paul in Jerusalem that *they would not* receive his testimony concerning him, so here he *encourages* him by a promise of much success in Corinth.—*Alford.*

11. **A year and six months**—The main thought of the words which the Lord spoke to Paul in the vision is undoubtedly, "Speak in this city, and be not silent;" and, accordingly, the period of time during which the apostle obeys this command of Christ must refer to the whole time in which he spoke at Corinth, and, therefore, must include the time until his departure.—*Gloag.* **Teaching the word of God among them**—Paul, like Wesley, "regarded all the world as his parish," and it is little likely that his restless zeal would have made him stay for nearly two years within the city walls. We know that there was a Church at Cenchrea, whose deaconess afterward "carried under the folds of her robe the whole future of Christian theology;" and saints were scattered in small communities throughout all Achaia.—*Farrar.* Corinth being a commercial and maritime city, visited by strangers from all parts, Paul had an opportunity of preaching the Gospel to the natives of many countries.—*Gloag.*

## Revised Version.

10 for I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to harm thee: for I

11 have much people in this city. And he dwelt *there* a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them.

12 But when Gal'li-o was proconsul of A-cha'ia, the Jews with one accord rose up against Paul, and brought

13 him before the judgement-seat, saying, This man persuadeth men to

12. Gallio—Gallio, or, to give his full name, M. Annaeus Novatus, who had taken the *agnomen* [after-name] of Gallio on his adoption by the rhetorician of that name, was the brother of L. Annaeus Seneca, the tutor of Nero. The philosopher dedicated to him two treatises on Anger and the Blessed Life; and the kindness of his nature made him a general favorite. He was every body's "dulcis Gallio," was praised by his brother for his disinterestedness and calmness of temper, as one "whom those even who could not love him more than they did, loved all too little."—*Seneca, Ep. civ.* On the whole, therefore, we may see in him a very favorable example of what philosophic culture was able to do for a Roman statesman.—*Plumptre.* **Proconsul**—This was the correct style of the governor of Achaia at this time, Claudius having transferred to the Senate that province, which, under Tiberius and Caligula, had been in the hands of the emperor, and accordingly governed by a procurator. If the "Life of Claudius," by Suetonius, had not survived, the designation here employed might have been noted as an exception to Luke's habitual accuracy.—*Jacobson.* **Achaia**—The Roman province, with Corinth for its capital, answering very nearly to the modern kingdom of Greece, that is, Peloponnesus and Greece proper. The other province comprehended Macedonia, Epirus, Thessaly, and part of Illyria. **The Jews made insurrection** [Rev. Ver., *rose up against.*]—Probably the change of government on the arrival of Gallio encouraged the unbelieving Jews to make this assault on Paul.—*Gloag.* **Brought him to the judgment-seat**—The habit of the Roman governors of provinces was commonly to hold their court in the *agora*, or market-place, on certain fixed days.—*Plumptre.*

13. **Saying**—From Gallio's words it is clear that the indictment contained a statement of some length, not given by Luke, which he heard

## Authorized Version.

men to worship God contrary to the law.

14 And when Paul was now about to open *his* mouth, Gal'li-o said unto the Jews, <sup>14</sup> If it were a matter of wrong or wicked lewdness, O ye Jews, reason would that I should bear with you:

15 But if it be a question of words and names, and *of* your law, look ye to it; for I will be no judge of such *mat-ters*.

16 And he drave them from the judg-ment seat.

17 Then all the Greeks <sup>15</sup> took Sos'the-

## Revised Version.

worship God contrary to the law.

14 But when Paul was about to open his mouth, Gal'li-o said unto the Jews, If indeed it were a matter of wrong or of wicked villany, O ye Jews, reason would that I should bear with you: but if they are questions about words and names and your own law, look to it yourselves; I am not minded to be a judge of these mat-ters. And he drave them from the

17 judgement-seat. And they all laid

<sup>14</sup> Chap. 23. 29; 25. 11, 19.—<sup>15</sup> 1 Cor. 1. 1.

completely through.—*Whedon*. This fellow [Rev. Ver., *This man*.]—The words *this fellow*, though the substantive is an interpolation, fairly express the contempt implied in the use of the Greek pronoun.—*Plumptre*. Persuadeth—The word in the original implies the undermining of previous belief.—*Jacobson*. To worship God contrary to the law—The Romans had granted the Jews full liberty to practice their own religion; and, therefore, Paul's accusers hoped that Gallio would interfere and punish him for teaching doctrines which they asserted were in opposition to the law of Moses. According to their views, it was the duty of the Roman government to prevent any attempt to pervert or overturn their religion.—*Gloag*.

14. Paul was now about to open his mouth—The phrase always implies, as has been noticed, the beginning of a set discourse. Paul was about to begin a formal *apologia*, or defense. This, however, proved to be unnecessary.—*Plumptre*. Gallio said—Gallio does not permit Paul to reply, not from any disrespect to the apostle, but because he did not think it necessary for him to enter upon his defense. He was accused of no crime which came under the cognizance of the Roman law.—*Gloag*. A matter of wrong or wicked lewdness [Rev. Ver., *wicked villainy*.]—*If it were a matter of injustice* (a plain violation of law, infringing on the rights of others) or *wicked mischief*, (even a mischievous act of a malicious kind, not directly contravening any special statute.)—*L. Abbott*. Both words were probably used in a strictly forensic sense—the first for acts of open wrong, such as robbery or assault; the second for those in which a fraudulent cunning was the chiefelement.—*Plumptre*. I should bear with you—The very turn of the phrase expresses an

intense impatience. Even in the case supposed, his tolerance would have required an effort. As it was, those Jews were now altogether intolerable.—*Plumptre*.

15. Words and names—To a Roman, the question whether Jesus was the Christ would seem to be a mere question of names.—*L. Abbott*. Of your law—As a Roman official he refused to recognize the authority of the law of Moses. Look ye to it—"Settle it as best you are able" is the purport. This was not a permission for the Jews to execute judgment according to their own will, but a warning that they must not expect the Roman courts to interfere in their petty differences. I will be no judge [Rev. Ver., *I am not minded to be a judge*.]—Of such matters. This conduct entirely agrees with the character of Gallio given by his brother Seneca—that of an amiable and upright man.—*Gloag*.

16. Drave them—Bid them clear the room so peremptorily as indicated ready compulsion by officers.—*Whedon*. Observe, as an indication of the simple truthfulness of the narrative, that the narrator does not hesitate to describe the contempt of a Roman official for the Jewish nation and the Christian cause.—*L. Abbott*.

Let us at least do justice to Roman impartiality. In Gallio, in Lysias, in Felix, in Festus, in the centurion Julius, even in Pilate, different as were their degrees of rectitude, we cannot but admire the trained judicial insight with which they at once saw through the subterranean injustice and virulent animosity of the Jews in bringing false charges against innocent men.—*Farrar*.

17. All the Greeks—The crowd present at the public place of judgment. The Greeks of this degenerate age had learned to watch their Roman arbiter's eye with servile adulation, and

## Authorized Version.

nes, the chief ruler of the synagogue, and beat him before the judgment seat. And Gal'li-o cared for none of those things.

to take the cue from his words. When, therefore, Gallio ordered the Jews out of his presence these Greeks seem, without rebuke from Gallio, to have caught their ringleader and chastised him for having come into the judicial presence. But, in addition to the present unpopularity of the Jewish race, this set of Greeks here present had, probably, taken some interest in this case. They knew that the quarrel between the Jews and Paul was a Jew and Gentile strife. Without any deep sympathy with Paul's religion they were at any rate *against the Jews* in the contest.—*Whedon*. **Sosthenes, the chief ruler**—Probably Sosthenes had succeeded Crispus as chief ruler of the synagogue, and was a leader in this movement. There is no reason for identifying him with the Sosthenes who is united with Paul in the salutation of the First Epistle to the Corinthians. 1 Cor. 1. 1. **Beat him**—Cuffed and buffeted, not scourged. **Gallio cared for none of those things**—The object of this remark is to represent the complete failure of the attempt of the Jews. So little did the charge against Paul prosper that the accusers were themselves beaten without the interference of the judge, who by this indifference declared himself on the side of the accused.—*Meyer*. Perhaps he was not unwilling that he who had joined in a furious and unprovoked persecution should feel the effect of it in the excited passions of the people. At all events he was but following the common practice among the Romans, which was to regard the Jews with contempt, and to care little how much they were exposed to popular fury and rage.—*Barnes*.

The haughty, distinguished, and cultivated Gallio, brother of Seneca, Proconsul of Achaia, the most popular man and the most eminent *littérateur* of his day, would have been to the last degree amazed had any one told him that so paltry an occurrence would be forever recorded in history; that it would be the only scene in his life in which posterity would feel a moment's interest; that he would owe to it any immortality he possesses; that he would for all time be mainly judged of by the glimpse we get of him on that particular morning; that he had flung away the greatest opportunity of his life when he closed the lips of the haggard Jewish prisoner whom his decision rescued from the clutches of his countrymen.—*Farrar*.

## Revised Version.

hold on Sos'the-nes, the ruler of the synagogue, and beat him before the judgement-seat. And Gal'li-o cared for none of these things.

## Authorities to be Consulted.

Farrar, chap. xxvii. Conybeare and Howson, chap. xi. Schaff's Apostolic Church, p. 273. Lesson Helps for 1877, Third Quarter. Biblical Studies, p. 417. Freeman's Manners and Customs, 841, 880, 834, 851, 656. Bonar's Light and Truth, iii, 168. Guthrie's Sunday Magazine, 1871, p. 331. Sermons, by F. W. Robertson, The Word and the World; H. Melville, Paul, a Tent-maker; Bishop F. D. Huntington, Entrance in the Church; W. Jay, Spiritual Successor from Appointed Means; S. Leathes, (Bampton Lectures,) The Christ of the Acts. Forster's Cyclopedia of Illustrations, [numbers marked with a star refer to poetical quotations,] ver. 4-6: \*3863; 6: 2633, 2636; 8: 2815; 10: 11429; 17: 544.

## Practical Thoughts.

[THE CHRISTIAN IN VARIOUS RELATIONS.]

1. The Christian will seek out in every place those who are of the same character with himself, and will enjoy fellowship with them. Ver. 2.
2. The Christian will be diligent in secular business, having as his motive faithfulness to every task as done to the Lord. Ver. 3.
3. The Christian will not permit his week-day work to interfere with the call of God to work for souls. Ver. 4.
4. The Christian will be ready every-where to hear testimony to the Gospel, and to persuade men to repentance. Vers. 4, 5.
5. The Christian will be broad in his sympathies, and invite all men, of every race and condition, to salvation. Ver. 6.
6. The Christian will live in fellowship with Christ, and will find comfort for trial in the Saviour's presence. Vers. 9, 10.
7. The Christian will see the results of his labors, and be encouraged in knowing that he has not lived in vain. Vers. 10, 11.

## Sermon Outline.

BY REV. D. H. MULLER, D.D.

The evangelistic work of Paul can never fail to interest the Christian believer and statesman. The varied epistles to the Churches, with their important contents; the apostolic method of preaching and planting Churches in the great centers of population and activity; each peculiar city testing the

adaptability of the Gospel, and the conquests made, all the outcome of Paul's missionary labors, make the history of his work inspiring and suggestive. To the believer it strengthens confidence in the divineness of Gospel truth. To the statesman it demonstrates the only solution of earnest social and political problems, and presents an efficient remedy for manifold local and general evils. To Corinth, a city of vices, full of worldliness and licentiousness fostered, if not created, by commercial prosperity; a city of composite population, in which superstition, paganism, intellectual speculative skepticism, and bigoted traditionalism were represented by Roman, Greek, and Jew, Paul came with the word of God, and presents the picture of the Gospel confronting social corruption, and in the victory achieved attests that Gospel to be the power and wisdom of God.

To secure this result :—

1. *Conflicts were encountered.* (a) In the opposition of Jews. Reform in Church meets bitter opposition. Savonarola, Luther, Wesley, etc. (b) In the corrupt condition of the Gentiles. The worship of the infamous goddess Aphrodite, with one thousand priestesses, reveals the debasement and impurity of the people. The minister to-day confronts the same antagonisms in Ritualism, that is, Romanism, etc.; and Rationalism, that is, Materialism, or Agnosticism, the modern name for Epicureanism.

2. *Courage required renewal.* (a) The apostle was discouraged by straitened circumstances. The same embarrassment fetters many workers, and hinders grand enterprises. (b) He found foes where he expected to find friends. This is always a severe test of faith. (c) The populous and dissolute city impressed melancholy. The experiences of De Quincey on entering London for the first time have been shared by persons whose susceptibilities were

less acute than his. The sense of isolation, blended with thoughts of toil and peril, produces this feeling. (d) Apparent failure in Athens was a factor of the apostle's depression. To relieve this despondency (e) the apostle was strengthened by a vision of the Lord—by a voice of command—by the assurance of protection—by a prophecy of fulfilled success.

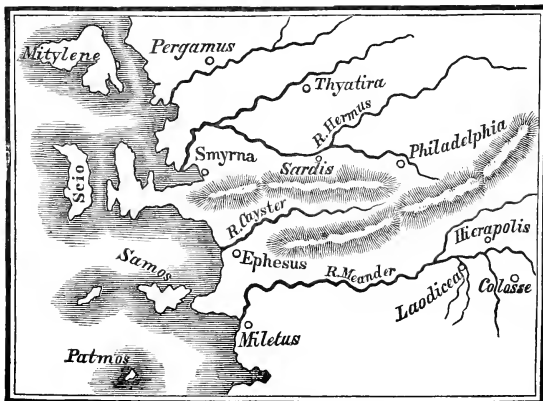
Our relief from depression is God. Here is the secret of Christian endurance. We have a source of strength which never fails. His Spirit whispers peace to our souls. His word reveals his love more than any vision. Whatever our anxiety or trouble, the Lord speaks to us, saying, "Be of good cheer, thy hopes shall be realized. Thou art under divine care. Thou shalt receive God's protection. Do thy appointed work for his glory, and at last thou shalt enter on thy reward."

3. *Conquests were made.* (a) The Gospel was accepted by Jew and Gentile. (b) Reforms were wrought. All reforms spring from Christ. (c) A Church was planted. We have the same work, weapons, and assured triumph as Paul. Salvation of America hinges largely on the salvation of her cities. The Gospel of a divine Person and Fact will win. Nor legislation nor education will save our nation or the world. The Gospel, simple and pure, is the sovereign remedy. This Paul offered to the corrupt pagan city of Corinth, and it is our munition and defense to-day. "Christ and him crucified" is a theme large enough for the uttermost of the world's need.

The reasons that emphasize a vigorous and speedy use of the remedy, are—

1. The material growth and safety of a city, nation, and the world depend upon the activity and purity of moral and spiritual forces.

2. A common origin, brotherhood, and destiny should make us swift to extend a helping hand.



Map of the Vicinity of Ephesus.

## THE COMING OF THE LORD.—1 Thess. 4. 13-18; 5. 1-8.

**GOLDEN TEXT.**—For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.—1 THESS. 4. 14.

TIME.—A. D. 52. For rulers, see Lesson I.

PLACE.—This epistle was written, while Paul was at Corinth, to the Church at Thessalonica.

INTRODUCTION.—*The First Epistle to the Thessalonians.*—First written of Paul's thirteen apostolical epistles, it stands first in those editions of the Greek Testament, like Wetstein's and Wordsworth's, which give the epistles in chronological order. It exhibits the freshness of the apostle's manhood in its style. It deals with the earlier foes of his preaching, the pagans and the hostile Jews, not with the later, the Judaizers and the Gnostics. It states glowingly the first principles of the blessed Gospel; it teaches by vivid pictures the doctrine of the resurrection, the advent, and the retribution; but enters into no full elaborations, like the Epistles to the Romans, Galatians, and Corinthians. It is not only in time Paul's earliest epistle, but it is, in freshness, simplicity, and vigor, his *youngest* epistle. Thessalonica was Paul's second European Church. Of his first entrance there, after his shameful inflictions at Philippi; his arduous manual labor, and impressive preaching; his descriptions of Christ's second advent, so vivid as to create its "ideal presence" in the imagination of his hearers; his exaltation of Christ on the throne of the world so lofty as to provoke the molocrats to arraign him before the Demos on charge of treason against Caesar; and of his final discharge on bail by Jason, obliging his exile from the city, the brief history is given in Acts 17. 4-9.—*Whedon.* The epistle was written from Corinth (not from Athens, as the unauthorized subscription states) on the receipt of news from the Church, soon after Paul had left it, (see Lesson VIII.) that its members were perplexed by certain questions concerning the state of the dead and the second coming of Christ. Those to whom the apostle now wrote had been recently converted from heathenism; that they had enjoyed his preaching but a short time; that they had few or no books on the subject of religion; and that they were surrounded by those who had no faith in the doctrine of the resurrection at all, and who were doubtless able—as skeptical philosophers often are now—to urge their objections to the doctrine in such a way as greatly to perplex Christians.—*Larnes.*

## Authorized Version.

13 But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.

† Lev. 19. 28; Deut. 14. 1, 2; 2 Sam. 12. 20.

13. **Have . . . ignorant**—Paul's habitual formula, in negative or positive shape, of starting a new topic. "I would that ye know." Col. 2. 1. "I would not that ye should be ignorant." 1 Cor. 10. 1. So 1 Cor. 11. 3, and Phil. 1. 12.—*Whedon.* **Concerning them which are asleep**—The Thessalonians perhaps had asked a question, or Timothy may have given information respecting their uneasiness about some of their number who had died. Whether these were many or few, or even none at all, so that they were troubled merely by the imminent peril of death, they had no clearness of view as to their fate.—*Riggenbach.* They seem especially to have feared that those of their brethren who had fallen on sleep before the expected advent of the Lord would not partake in its blessings and glories.—*Ellicott.* **Asleep**—This

## Revised Version.

13 But we would not have you ignorant, brethren, concerning them that fall asleep; that ye sorrow not, even as the rest, which have no hope.

was an expression conveying definite meaning to the Thessalonians as importing *the dead in the Church.* Verse 16. No inference must therefore be drawn from the apostle's use of this word, as to the intermediate state; for the word is a mere common term.—*Alford.* **That ye sorrow not**—The word *sorrow* is *absolute*, that ye *mourn not at all*; not to be joined with what follows, and to be made only to mean that ye sorrow not in the same manner as, etc. He forbids *mourning* altogether. But we must remember *what sort of mourning* it was. It was mourning for *them*; not mourning for *our* loss in their *absence*, but for *theirs*, and *in so far*, for ours also.—*Alford.* **Even as others** Rev. Ver., *Even as the rest.*—The others (Eph. 2. 3) obviously includes *all*, whether skeptical Jews or unenlightened heathens, (Chrysostom,) who had no sure hope in

## Authorized Version.

14 For <sup>2</sup>if we believe that Je'sus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Je'sus will God bring with him.

15 For this we say unto you <sup>3</sup>by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive *and* remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep.

<sup>2</sup>1 Cor. 15. 15.—<sup>3</sup>1 Kings 13. 17.

any future resurrection.—*Ellicott*. It was the custom of the heathens, on the death of their relations, to make a show of excessive grief by shaving their heads and cutting their flesh, and by loud howlings and lamentations over the dead. They even hired persons, who had it for a trade to make these howlings and cries.—*Macknight*. **Which have no hope**—Nothing in all poetry is more pathetic than the lines of the Greek Mosechus, ending with "we shall sleep the long, limitless, unawakable slumber." Theocritus says, "There are hopes in the living, but hopeless are the dead." Æschylus, "Of the once dead there is no resurrection." And the pagan epitaphs are often sentences of everlasting extinction. Says Mr. Withrow, in his work on the Catacombs: "*Domus aterna*, an eternal home, and *Somno aternali*, in eternal sleep, are written on their tombs, frequently accompanied by an inverted torch, the emblem of despair."—*Wheldon*.

We must, indeed, long after them, but not bewail them; we ought not, for their sakes, to put on black garments, since there they are already clothed in white. We must not give the heathen an opportunity justly to blame Christians by sorrowing for those whom they speak of as living with God, as if they were lost and perished men.—*Cyprian*.

14. **Died and rose again**—The two foundations of Christian faith united in one enunciation.—*Ellicott*. *That Jesus* (he uses the human name) *died*, (here not *fell asleep*, but without any disguise he speaks of *death*.) He brought to light a victorious life. But he arose out of death, was not glorified without passing through death; not even Christ.—*Riggenbach*. **Them also which sleep in Jesus** [Rev. Ver., *that are fallen asleep in Jesus*.]—"Sleep in Jesus" ought to be "fell asleep through Jesus," that is, by his merits have had their death turned into sleep. "Sleep in Jesus" is a beautiful and true expression; but it is not the one used here.—*Alford*. The apostle says Jesus died, the saints sleep; a believer's death is called a sleep. I do not find

## Revised Version.

14 For if we believe that Je'sus died and rose again, even so them also that are fallen asleep <sup>1</sup>in Je'sus will

15 God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we that are alive, that are left unto the <sup>2</sup>coming of the Lord, shall in no wise precede them that

<sup>1</sup>Gr. *through*. Or, *will God through Jesus*.—<sup>2</sup>Gr. *presence*.

that Christ's death is called a sleep; no, his death was death indeed, death with a curse in it; but the believer's death is turned by Christ into a sweet and silent sleep.—*Burkitt*. **Will God bring with him**—When He brings Jesus into the world again, (Hebrews 1. 6,) he will bring them, cause them to come, along with Jesus, will let them share in his heavenly manifestation.—*Hofmann*.

15. **We say . . . by the word of the Lord**—Not in *my* words do I speak; my statement confines itself within the sphere of a word of the Lord.—*Riggenbach*. **We which are alive and remain** [Rev. Ver., *that are alive and are left*.]—The "*we*" is an affectionate identifying of ourselves with our fellows of all ages, as members of the same body, under the same Head, Christ Jesus.—*Elmunds*. Paul is to be understood as classing himself with "those who are *being left* on earth," (compare Acts 2. 47,) without being conceived to imply that he had any precise or definite expectations as to his own case.—*Ellicott*. **Unto the coming of the Lord**—The coming again of the Lord is not one single act, as his resurrection, or the descent of the Spirit, or the final coming to judgment, but the great complex of all these, the result of which shall be his taking his people to himself, to be where he is.—*Alford*. And yet all these expressions seem to point toward *one definite event* which is yet to take place, according to the opinion of most commentators. **Shall not prevent** [Rev. Ver., *Shall in no wise precede*.]—Shall not arrive into the presence of the Lord, and share the blessings and glories of his advent, before others.—*Ellicott*. **Them which are asleep**—Those who have passed away before the coming of the Lord.

To the primitive Christians all this was reality. They have left their faith and hope recorded upon the tombs which they constructed in their hiding-places in the subterranean excavations or quarries of the city of Rome. In those long galleries of catacombs where the bodies of martyrs and persecuted saints were laid to rest there is not one



## Authorized Version.

16 For <sup>4</sup>the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:

17 Then we which are alive *and* remain shall be caught up together with them <sup>5</sup>in the clouds, to meet the Lord

## Revised Version.

16 are fallen asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven, with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:

17 then we that are alive, that are left, shall together with them be caught up in the clouds, to meet the Lord

<sup>4</sup> Matt. 24, 30; Acts, 1, 11; 2 Thess. 1, 7. — <sup>5</sup> 1 Cor. 15, 51; Rev. 4, 17.

trace of despondency or gloom. It is written over one and another, "She sleeps;" "In peace;" "With Christ." The anchor, the cross, the crown, the symbols of the resurrection and immortality, make those dark galleries bright with the presence of an eternal life.—*J. P. Thompson.*

**16. Lord himself**—Not by messenger or representative, but his own personal *self*. Then shall our eyes behold *him*. The *himself* is emphatic with divine dignity.—*Whedon.* **Shall descend from heaven**—Said for solemnity's sake, and to show that it will not be a mere gathering to him, but *he himself* will descend, and we all shall be summoned before him.—*Alford.* **Shout . . . voice . . . trump**—We have to recognize three particulars following each other in rapid succession: the commander's call of the king himself; the voice of the archangel summoning the other angels; the trumpet which awakes the dead and collects the believers.—*Riggenbach.* Three sounds are distinctly mentioned, but I do not pretend to know what they are.—*Dr. John Dick.* **With a shout**—Whether this shout proceeds from the descending Christ or the attending host is not here stated. The ancient expositors generally regarded it as the summons of Christ to the living and the dead. Luther translates it "war-ery," and understands it as the joyful exclamation of the angelic host, "the van and the guards;" Ellieott says: "It appears, however, more plausible to refer it directly to the archangel, as Christ's minister, and to regard it as a general expression of what is afterward more distinctly specified by the substantives which follow." **The archangel**—Literally, "chief angel." He must be an angel, the highest among the angels, answering to the high-priest as compared with the priests.—*Riggenbach.* **Trump of God**—*Vocal* symbol of the divine presence and person; as the glory is the *visible* symbol. It tones are heard, but no instrument is seen. It was, probably, never heard but once by human ears, and that was at Sinai. Exod. 19, 16-19. Then, as here, it was the announcing strain of the ecles-

tial hosts forming the advance procession of the approaching divine One.—*Whedon.* **The dead in Christ shall rise first**—Not with any reference to "first resurrection," (Rev. 20, 5,) but only to the fact that the resurrection of the dead in Christ shall be prior to the assumption of the living. The general resurrection of *all* men does not here come into consideration.—*Ellieott.*

**17. We which are alive and remain** [Rev. Ver., *are left*.]—Again he says *we*, recommending thus the expression to Christians of all ages, each generation bequeathing to the succeeding one a continually increasing obligation to look for the coming of the Lord.—*Edmunds.* **Shall be caught up**—We shall be caught up with them at the same time that they shall be caught up. The transformation specified in 1 Cor. 15, 52, 53, will necessarily first take place, upon which the glorified and luciform body will be caught up in the enveloping and upbearing clouds.—*Ellieott.* **Together with them**—We, the transformed living, together with them, the resurrected dead. **In the clouds**—In Scripture multitudes of angels are called *clouds*. Matt. 24, 30. Wherefore, caught up in clouds may signify caught up by the ministry of angels.—*Macknight.* **To meet the Lord**—To meet Christ, as persons of distinction meet a king to salute him, while others must wait for him, as criminals for the judge.—*Chrysostom.* **In the air**—The air marks the way to heaven, and includes the inter-space between earth and heaven, with greater or less latitude according to the context.—*Ellieott.* It is nowhere said that the transactions of the judgment will occur *upon* the earth. The world would not be spacious enough to contain all the assembled living and dead, and hence the throne of judgment will be fixed in the ample space above it.—*Barnes.* The grand congregation of the judgment may be in pure space; for these resurrection bodies, absolved from the power of gravitation and of power by pure volition, can tread upon a plane of pure space as easily as Jesus trod upon the sea, or as we tread upon a pavement.—*Whedon.* **So shall we be**

## Authorized Version.

in the air: and so <sup>a</sup> shall we ever be with the Lord.

18 Wherefore <sup>a</sup> comfort one another with these words.

1 But of <sup>b</sup> the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you.

2 For yourselves know perfectly, that <sup>c</sup> the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night.

<sup>a</sup> John 12. 26; 14. 3; 17. 24; Rev. 21. 3, 4; 22. 3-5.—<sup>b</sup> Or, exhort.—<sup>c</sup> Matt. 24. 3.—<sup>d</sup> Rev. 3. 3.

ever with the Lord.—But it is not in the air that this being ever with Christ takes place. Only the meeting takes place in the air, not the abiding.—*Riggenbach*. The top and height of the saints' blessedness in heaven consists in this, that they shall for ever be there with Christ.—*Barkitt*. Of a burning world, a resurrection and condemnation of the wicked, and a new earth, no account is here given; for, as Lunemann well notes, Paul does not here profess to give a full picture of the last things, but simply such a glimpse as shall meet the doubt and grief in regard to the late deceased Christians.—*Whedon*.

18. **Comfort one another**—They were to bring these glorious truths and these bright prospects before their minds, in order to alleviate the sorrows of bereavement. The topics of consolation are these: first, that those who had died in the faith would not always lie in the grave; second, that when they rose they would not occupy an inferior condition because they were cut off before the coming of the Lord; and, third, that all Christians, living and dead, would be received to heaven and dwell forever with the Lord.—*Barnes*. **With these words**—The apostle's declarations here are made in the practical tone of strict matter-of-fact, and are given as literal details, to console men's minds under an existing difficulty. Never was a place where the analogy of symbolical apocalyptic language was less applicable. Either these details must be received by us as matter of practical expectation or we must set aside the apostle as one divinely empowered to teach the Church.—*Alford*.

In those scenes we shall all be personally interested. If we do not survive till they occur, yet we shall have an important part to act in them. We shall hear the archangel's trump; we shall be summoned before the descending Judge. In these scenes we shall mingle not as careless spectators, but as those whose eternal doom is there to be determined, and with all the intensity of emotion derived from the fact that the Son of God will de-

## Revised Version.

in the air: and so shall we ever be

18 with the Lord. Wherefore <sup>b</sup> comfort one another with these words.

5 But concerning the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need

2 that aught be written unto you. For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief

<sup>b</sup> Or, exhort.

send to judge us, and to pronounce our final doom.—*Barnes*.

1. **But**—Here Paul treats of the advent from the other side, and exhorts us to be at all times composed and ready for the day of the Lord—equally remote from anxious calculation or impatient expectancy: *Now He comes!* and from the drowsy security which says: *Not for a long time yet!*—*Riggenbach*. **Of the times and the seasons**—*Times* are the great time-flows of thousands of years: *seasons*, the special *time-points*, or epochs, that divide off the flow. It was on this very point that 2 Pet. 3. 8, declares that "one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day." Prophetic time is measured by the arithmetic of God.—*Whedon*. **No need that I write**—As the next verse suggests, because they had been accurately informed by the apostle, by word of mouth, of all that it was necessary for them to know.—*Ellicott*.

2. **For yourselves know**—By the explicit oral teachings of the apostle, with which they were already familiar.—**Know perfectly**—There is something surprising in this turn: *ye know precisely*—that the time cannot be known! Indeed, that lies in the nature of the case; the day *is to be* a surprise to the whole world. There is no determination of the time—only of the signs of the time.—*Riggenbach*. **Day of the Lord**—An old Testament phrase to designate any period of God's terrible visitation. Joel 1. 15; 2. 11; Ezek. 13. 5; Isa. 2. 12. Here specifically applied to the day of the event just described, (chap. 4. 15-18,) the Parousia. **Cometh**—Not future; for it is an ever-pending *He cometh!*—*Whedon*. **As a thief in the night**—The comparison is striking, and describes the coming not merely as something sudden and unexpected, but also as unwelcome, terrifying for the worldly-minded, plundering them of that to which their heart clings, stripping them of their possessions.—*Hofmann*. This remarkable com-

## Authorized Version.

3 For when they shall say, Peace and safety, then <sup>9</sup>sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.

4 But <sup>10</sup>ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief.

5 Ye are all <sup>11</sup>the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness.

6 Therefore let us not sleep, as *do*

<sup>9</sup> 1sa. 13, 6.—<sup>10</sup> 1 John 2, 8.—<sup>11</sup> Eph. 5, 8.

parison of the Lord to a *thief* was first used by our Lord himself in Matt. 24. 43, 44; and Luke 12. 39, 40. And thence it became a standard simile. 2 Pet. 3. 10. Wordsworth acutely argues that none but Jesus would have invented such a comparison, and that, therefore, the Thessalonians must have had a gospel of either Matthew or Luke to have learned it from.—*Whedon*.

3. **When they**—All unbelieving and unthinking men. Comp. Matt. 24. 38; Luke 17. 27. The true believers were always watching and waiting, knowing the uncertainty and unexpectedness of the hour of the Lord's coming.—*Ellicott*. **Shall say**, [Rev. Ver., *are saying*,] **Peace and safety**—One of the most remarkable facts about the history of man is, that he takes no warning from his Maker; he never changes his plans, or feels any emotion, *because* his Creator "thunders damnation along his path," and threatens to destroy him in hell. **Sudden destruction cometh**—The word *destruction* is familiar to us. It means, properly, demolition; pulling down; the annihilation of the form of any thing, or that form of parts which constitutes it what it is; as the destruction of grass by eating; of a forest by cutting down the trees; of life by murder; of the soul by consigning it to misery. It does not necessarily mean annihilation—for a house or city is not annihilated which is pulled down or burnt; a forest is not annihilated which is cut down; and a man is not annihilated whose character and happiness are destroyed.—*Barnes*. **As travail upon a woman**—The point of comparison is the sudden, inevitable occurrence of the rending pain, the mortal anguish; also perhaps (*Calvin, Rivier*) that they bear within themselves the cause of their sorrow.—*Ruggenbach*. **They shall not escape**—It is clear from this, that when the Lord Jesus shall come the world will not all be converted. There will be some to be "destroyed." How

## Revised Version.

3 in the night. When they are saying, Peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall in no wise escape. But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you <sup>4</sup>as a thief: for ye are all sons of light, and sons of the day; we are not of the night, nor of darkness; so then let us not sleep, as do the rest, but let us

<sup>4</sup> Some ancient authorities read *in threes*.

large this proportion will be it is impossible now to ascertain. This supposition, however, is not inconsistent with the belief that there will be a general prevalence of the Gospel before that period.—*Barnes*.

4. **But ye, brethren, are not in darkness**—They are, in relation to the coming of the day of the Lord, as men are who are awake when the robber comes. They could see his approach, and could prepare for it, so that it would not take them by surprise.—*Barnes*. It was a darkness, not only of the mind and understanding, (Eph. 4. 18,) but of the heart and will. 1 John 2. 9.—*Ellicott*. **That that day**—The day of the Lord's coming. **Should overtake you as a thief**—Not "as a thief is overtaken," but with the same meaning as in verse 2, as the thief at midnight enters the house whose occupant is not watching. "You will never be overtaken by that day, because you will be ever ready for its coming."

5. **Ye are all the children of light** [Rev. Ver., *all sons of light*.]—All who are Christians. The phrase "*children of light*" is a Hebraism, meaning that they were the enlightened children of God.—*Barnes*. You (*a*) and all we Christians (*b*) have no reason to fear, and no excuse for being surprised by, the day of the Lord; for *we are sons of light and the day*, (signifying that we belong to, having our origin from, the light and the day.)—*Alford*. **We are not of the night**—The change of person from "*ye*" to "*we*" implies this: *Ye* are sons of light, because ye are Christians; and *we*, Christians, are not of night nor darkness.—*D. Brown*.

He, the Light of light, will certainly give his especial help, in no ordinary measure, to the man who, for his sake, is striving to live in the light. He will bless the open-hearted man with the highest of all blessings, the sure sense of his presence with him.—*Bishop Temple*.

6. **Let us not sleep**—What is meant is clear—

## Authorized Version.

others; but let us watch and be sober.

7 For <sup>12</sup>they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are <sup>13</sup>drunken in the night.

8 But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting <sup>14</sup>on the breastplate of faith and love; and for a helmet the hope of salvation.

<sup>12</sup> Luke 21. 34.—<sup>13</sup> Acts 2. 15.—<sup>14</sup> Isa. 59. 17.

ness of spirit, the freshness of the sharpened sense, vigilant waiting for the Lord, circumspection over against the enemy.—*Riggenbach*. **As do others** [Rev. Ver., *the rest*.]—As do the rest of men around us, the unbelieving and unthinking masses of mankind. **Let us watch**—Christians are always to be wakeful and vigilant; they are so to expect the coming of the Redeemer that he will not find them off their guard, and will not come upon them by surprise. A Christian *ought* always so to live that the coming of the Son of God in the clouds of heaven would not excite the least alarm.—*Barnes*. **And be sober** is frequently joined with watchfulness, (1 Pet. 5. 8,) and often. As intoxication in the literal sense disposes to sleep, so is it here understood in a comprehensive signification. The innate weakness and sluggishness of the flesh of itself inclines to drowsiness, (Matt. 26. 41,) therefore should we avoid what would involve us in the guilt of self-stupefaction and of thus aggravating this tendency.—*Riggenbach*.

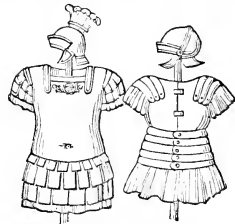
**7, 8. Drunken in the night**—Among the Greeks and Romans revelry and drunkenness were the order by night, but to be drunken by day is mentioned as the height of profligacy. The historian Polybius records it as a signal dishonor of one that he became so given to inebriation that "even by day he was often conspicuous to his friends, drunk."—*Whedon*. **Let us, who are** [Rev. Ver., *since we are*] **of the day**—We Christians profess to be day people, not night people; therefore our work ought to be day-work, not night-work; our conduct such as will bear the eye of day, and such has no need of the veil of night.—*Edmunds*. **Putting on the breastplate**—The breast and head being particularly exposed in battle, and wounds in these parts being extremely dangerous, the ancients carefully defended the breast and the head of their soldiers by armor, to which the apostle here compares the Christian virtues "of faith and love." The apostle's meaning, stripped

## Revised Version.

7 watch and be sober. For they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night.

8 But let us, since we are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for a helmet, the hope of salvation.

of the metaphor, is this: that to defend our affections against the impression of outward and



Roman Coats of Mail.

sensible objects, nothing is so effectual as faith in the promises of Christ and love to God and man.—*Macknight*. **Helmet**—The armor for the head. **The hope of salvation**—That *hope* lifts up the head toward heaven, and wards off all the power of the blows inflicted by Satan in this world. Sorrow loses the power to weigh down; anticipations of coming evil are neutralized; infidel despair of immortality is dispersed, when the *hope of salvation* makes strong our head, as *faith and love* have confirmed our heart.—*Whedon*. Notice that these arms are defensive only, as against a sudden attack—and belong, therefore, not so much to the Christian's conflict with evil as (from the context) to his guard against being surprised by the day of the Lord as a thief in the night.—*Alford*.

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### Practical Thoughts.

#### [THE COMING OF THE LORD.]

1. The promise of the Lord's coming is a comfort to the believer in the sorrows and partings of this life. Ver. 13.

2. The Lord's coming will be accompanied by the resurrection of those who sleep in him. Vers. 14, 15.

3. The Lord's coming will be from heaven, while the dead in Christ shall arise from the earth. Ver. 16.

4. The Lord's coming will be a sudden and public manifestation to all the earth. Ver. 16.

5. The Lord's coming shall be followed by the change of the believers then living, who shall dwell forever in his glorified presence. Ver. 17.

6. The Lord's coming shall be a joyful surprise to his followers, and a sudden terror to his foes. Vers. 1, 2.

7. The coming of the Lord should be ever in the mind of his people, as an event to be ready for at any moment. Ver. 6.

### Sermon Outline.

BY REV. H. LIEBHART, D.D.

INTRODUCTION.—In the catacombs at Rome there are two epitaphs. The one reads: "An eternal home; an eternal sleep." The other: "Here rests in the sleep of peace our brother, admitted into the presence of our Lord." The former is of Pagan, the latter of Christian, origin, and both are striking illustrations, on the one hand, of the hopelessness of unbelief; and on the other, of the bright future revealed by Christianity.

*Theme: Christian Revelation of our Future.*

I. *This revelation inspires us with a certain and blessed hope.* Chap. 4. 13-15.

1. No everlasting extinction, nor comfortless ignorance, nor dreamy imagination of a future state; but a well-founded surety that the child of God falls bodily asleep, ceases to toil and care, while the soul enters paradise.

There is no sleep of the soul, for God will bring through Jesus with him who sleeps, first the soul, and then the body in the resurrection. 2 Cor. 4. 14; 1 Cor. 15. 12-15; Col. 1. 18.

No despairing sorrow, although Christianity does not teach cruel stoicism. Abraham, Joseph, the first Christian, and our Lord himself, have wept at the tombs of loved ones. But the sorrow of the Christian is not heathenish, it is a hopeful sorrow.

2. The foundation of this blessed hope is the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Christ died, arose, and lives. Now, there is a tie between him and the believer which cannot be severed. He is the head and we the members; and he, being in glory, will bring us to glory. John 11. 25, 26. So sure is the apostle of this, that he calls the death of the Christian sleep, while he says Jesus died.

The death and resurrection of Christ has laid such an extensive foundation that the promise to be with Jesus embraces all believers. Those who fell asleep a thousand years ago, and those who will live at the coming of the Lord will be likewise with him. Verse, 15.

II. *Christian revelation unfolds the future to the necessary extent.* Chap. 4. 16-18.

Not every question is answered; not every detail described; but we are not lost in darkness.

We are told: (1) That at the end Jesus will come on earth to evince himself as Lord even of those who do not believe; that he will justify the faith and hope of his people, and sit in judgment over all. Psa. 72, 2-19. (2) That we shall be participants of the coming of the Lord; partake of the first resurrection, if asleep in Jesus; meet our Lord, and abide with him and all the saints and angels forever. Hence our comfort.

III. *The Christian revelation of our future urges watchfulness.* Chap. 5. 1-8.

So much (16-18) is revealed, but the time is not stated, because we are to be vigilant. We know: (1) That he cometh; (2) that his coming will be sudden; that we have the light, his revelation, and power to keep us watchful; therefore it is becoming to us, as children of bright daylight, not to be like those of the night, but to await our Lord in all soberness, putting on our breastplate, etc.

A. D. 53.]

## LESSON XII.

[March 23.

CHRISTIAN DILIGENCE.—2 Thess. 3. 1-18.

GOLDEN TEXT.—Be not weary in well doing.—2 THESS. 3. 13.

TIME.—A. D. 53. For rulers, see Lesson I.

PLACE.—This epistle was written by Paul from Corinth in Greece. See Descriptive Index.

CONNECTING LINKS.—The reception of Paul's First Epistle to the Thessalonians led to inquiries, in answer to which he wrote the Second Epistle.

INTRODUCTION. *The Second Epistle to Thessalonians.*—Since the sending of the first letter some one had been imposing upon the Thessalonians a letter in the apostle's name to the effect that the day of the Lord was close upon them, exciting them, and causing them to walk disorderly, and to disregard their own business in life. On being informed of this at Corinth, where he remained for a year and a half, he sent this Second Epistle, not contradicting, not even modifying, his former teaching, but filling it out and rendering it complete; informing them of those things which, in the divine counsels, were destined to precede the coming of the day of the Lord, and the manifestation of which was kept back by circumstances then existing.—*Alford.* Besides the salutation there are three sections, answering to the three chapters: I. Thanksgiving and prayer for the Thessalonians, chap. 1. 3-12. II. Instruction and exhortation in regard to the "man of sin," chap. 2. III. Sundry admonitions: (1) To prayer, with a confident expression of his hope respecting them, chap. 3. 1-5; (2) To correct the disorderly, chap. 3. 6-15. He then concludes with a special remark showing how his letters were thereafter to be identified, and the usual salutation and apostolic benediction, chap. 3. 16-18.—*Schaff.*

## Authorized Version.

1 Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord <sup>a</sup> may have *free* course, and be glorified, even as *it is* with you:

2 And that we may be delivered from <sup>b</sup> unreasonable and wicked men: for all *men* have not faith.

<sup>a</sup> May run; Matt. 9. 38.—<sup>b</sup> Absurd.

1. **Pray for us**—That is, for Paul, Silas, and Timothy, then engaged in arduous labors at Corinth. This request for the prayers of Christians is one which Paul often makes.—*Barnes.* **That the word of the Lord**—The gospel of salvation for all men, God's message as delivered by Paul. **Have free course**—A circumlocutory translation of simply the word for *run*. Compare Psa. 147. 15: "His word runneth very swiftly." The prayer is for the rapid spread of the Gospel.—*Whedon.* *To run* is to fulfill its course swiftly and without hinderance, not bound, (2 Tim. 2. 9.), to spread itself to where it is not yet; and, where it is already, to bestir itself and come into proper circulation.—*C. J. Riggerbach.* **Be glorified**—Really glorified by its fruit, and actual demonstration of its divine power and truth.—*Calvin.* That the word of God have free course and be glorified is not a thing that happens of itself, but is, in part, committed also to our fidelity. Every praying person, even though he himself has not the teaching faculty, is, on his part, a co-worker therein.—*Riggerbach.* **As it is with you**—It is evident from this that

## Revised Version.

3 Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may run and be glorified, even as also *it is* with you;

2 and that we may be delivered from unreasonable and evil men; for all 3 have not <sup>1</sup>faith. But the Lord is

<sup>1</sup> Or, *the faith.*

Paul met with some obstructions in preaching the Gospel where he was then laboring. What they were he mentions in the next verse.

2. **That we may be delivered**—Patiently to undergo suffering for Christ's sake, and yet to pray God for deliverance therefrom, are not inconsistent with each other, especially when the deliverance has for its object not so much our own case as the glorification of the divine name.—*Riggerbach.* **Unreasonable**—The word means, etymologically, *out of place*; and hence, as an adjective, signifies *unsuitable, unfitting*.—*Whedon.* Perhaps "perverse" is our nearest word to it. Who are these men? It is obvious that the key to the answer will be found in Acts 18. They were the Jews at Corinth who were at that time the especial adversaries of the apostle and his preaching.—*Alford.* **For all men have not faith**—Literally, *For to all men the (Christian) faith does not belong*—all men do not receive it—have no receptivity for it—obviously pointing at Jews by this description.—*Alford.* *Faith*, in this passage, does not signify the actual belief of the Gospel, but such a desire to

## Authorized Version.

3 But the Lord is faithful, who shall establish you, and <sup>1</sup>keep you from evil.

4 And we have confidence in the Lord touching you, that ye both do and will do the things which we command you.

5 And <sup>2</sup>the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ.

6 Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves <sup>3</sup>from every

## Revised Version.

faithful, who shall establish you, and

4 guard you from <sup>2</sup>the evil one. And we have confidence in the Lord touching you, that ye both do and will do the

5 things which we command. And the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patience of Christ.

6 Now we command, you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from

<sup>1</sup> John 17, 15; <sup>2</sup> Peter, 2, 9.—<sup>3</sup> 1 Chron. 29, 18; Matt. 22, 27; 1 John 4, 16.—Or, the patience of Christ; 1 Thess. 1, 3.—<sup>4</sup> Rom. 16, 17.—<sup>5</sup> 1 Cor. 5, 11; 1 Tim. 6, 5; 2 John 10.

<sup>2</sup>Or, evil.

know and to do the will of God as will dispose a person to believe the Gospel when fairly proposed to him.—*Macknight*. Just as there are kinds of soil with no fruitful elements for the reception of the seed, so there are hearts which have hardened themselves into unfitness for the Gospel. We should labor to save all, expecting to save some.

3. **The Lord**—Here, as in most places in Paul's epistles, referring to the Lord Jesus. **Is faithful**—He can be trusted when men are found perverse and evil, and will care for those who have placed themselves in his hands. The great hope of the Christian is in the faithfulness and the might of his Saviour. **Who shall establish you**—Place you on a sure foundation in spite of the malice of wicked men and the wiles of the devil. **Keep you**—The Lord will keep you, so that whatever is done to you outwardly shall do you no inward hurt.—*Riggenbach*. These words show that Paul was anxious for others rather than for himself. Against him malignant men directed all the stings of their wickedness, against him all their attacks were made, but he directs all his care toward his Thessalonians, lest any temptation should beset them.—*Calvin*. **From evil** [Rev. Ver., *the evil one*].—All the oppositions of wicked men, and the hinderances in the path of a saint, come from the great adversary, the malignant spirit of evil.

4. **Confidence in the Lord**—As the element in which his confidence is exercised shows it to be one assuming that they will act consistently with their Christian profession; and so gives the expectation the force of an exhortation, but at the same time a hopeful exhortation.—*Alford*. When Paul expresses the utmost confidence that Christians will live and act as becomes their profession, his reliance is not on any thing in themselves, but wholly on the

faithfulness of God.—*Barnes*. **Ye both do and will do**—That they *will do* he trusts, first, because God, on the divine side, will *establish and keep*, and you, on the human side, will consent to be established and kept; that is, that you *will do* the conditions of the full realization of God's establishing and keeping.—*Whedon*. **The things which we command**—Because the apostle in his commands spoke and wrote not by his own arbitrary will, but in accordance with the word of God.

5. **The Lord**—The Lord Jesus, as above. **Direct your hearts**—By the influence of his Spirit, guiding and controlling all their emotions and desires. **Into the love of God**—Into love on our part toward God. **Patient waiting for Christ** [Rev. Ver., *The patience of Christ*].—It must be, as Chrysostom says, "that we may endure as he endured;" *the patience of Christ* (genitive possessive) *which Christ showed*.—*Alford*. There is no reference here, as appears from the Authorized Version, to awaiting for Christ's second coming.

6. **Command you**—An authoritative phrase in Greek terms which are used by kings to their subjects, or generals to their soldiers. These are now our apostolic orders, solemnly enforced by being *in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ*. These are his orders by his representative apostle.—*Whedon*. **In the name of our Lord**—This idea is that the authority to administer discipline is derived from the Lord Jesus Christ, and is to be exercised in his name and to promote his honor.—*Barnes*. **Withdraw . . . from every brother**—Literally, *To furl the sails*, as we say, *to steer clear of*. Cf. ver. 14. Some had given up labor as though the Lord's day was immediately coming. He had enjoined mild censure of such in 1 Thess. 5, 14, "*Warn . . . the unruly*," but now that the mischief

## Authorized Version.

brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us.

7 For yourselves know how ye ought to follow us: for we behaved not ourselves disorderly among you;

8 Neither did we eat any man's bread for nought; but<sup>5</sup> wrought with labor and travail night and day, that we might not be chargeable to any of you:

<sup>5</sup> Acts 18. 3; 20. 34.

had become more confirmed, he enjoins strieter discipline, namely, withdrawal from their company, (cf. 1 Cor. 5. 11; 2 John 1. 10, 11.) not a formal sentence of excommunication, such as was subsequently passed on more heinous offenders, as in 1 Cor. 5. 5; 1 Tim. 1. 20.—*D. Brown.* This charge was made necessary, evidently, from the fact that some of his converts were from among the class of idlers, and needed the most stringent instruction that to be a Christian was to be a faithful performer of every secular and industrial duty. Yet as the Gospel opened the hearts of the wealthier portion to liberal charities, the temptation became strong after Paul's departure for the idler to avail himself of these means of support in idleness.—*Whedon.* That walketh disorderly—The proper idea of the word used here is that of soldiers who do not keep the ranks, who are regardless of order, and then referring to persons who are irregular in any way. Traditions—His written or verbal deliverances to them. These traditions they had received from him personally. They have no connection with the pretended traditions of the Romish Church, which have no valid proof of authenticity, and yet are reckoned by Romanists as authoritative part of "the word of God," co-ordinate with the Scriptures.—*Whedon.*

This is the true notion of Christian discipline. It is not primarily that of cutting a man off, or denouncing him, or excommunicating him; it is that of withdrawing from him. We cease to have fellowship with him. We do not regard him any longer as a Christian brother. We separate from him. We do not seek to affect him in any other respect. We do not injure his name or standing as a man, or hold him up to reprobation. We do not follow him with denunciation or a spirit of revenge. We simply cease to recognize him as a Christian brother when he shows that he is no longer worthy to be regarded as such. We do not deliver him over to the civil arm. We do not inflict any positive punishment on him. We leave him unmolested in all his

## Revised Version.

every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which<sup>3</sup> they

7 received of us. For yourselves know how ye ought to imitate us: for we behaved not ourselves disorderly among 8 you; neither did we eat bread for nought at any man's hand, but in labour and travail, working night and day, that we might not burden any of

<sup>3</sup> Some ancient authorities read *ye*.

rights as a citizen, a man, a neighbor, a husband, a father, and simply say that he is no longer one of us as a Christian. How different is this from *excommunication*, as it has been commonly understood! How different from the anathemas fulminated by the papacy, and the delivering of the heretic over to the civil power.—*Barnes.*

7, 8. Ye yourselves know—From the remembrance of Paul's conduct among them, they could know what their conduct should be. **We behaved not . . . disorderly**—In 1 Thess. 2. 10, he had already referred to his own conduct: "How holily and justly and unblamably we behaved ourselves among you." He did not claim absolute perfection, but he could point to his own life as well as his teachings. No person can teach with power unless he exemplifies his own instructions. **Wrought**—His *laboring* was probably at his trade of tent-making, on which see note, Acts 18. 3. From Phil. 4. 15, 16, it appears that Paul did have Philippian aid in his traveling expenses, and also support at Thessalonica. He was aided by the Macedonians at Corinth. Paul was a large taxpayer of the full-formed and powerful Churches, but mainly on other objects than himself. **Labor and travail**—Two Greek words similarly coupled in 2 Cor. 11. 27, (translated, "weariness and painfulness,") and 2 Thess. 3. 8; the latter word last, climactically as the stronger term. Wordsworth derives the former, in Greek, from a word signifying to *hew*, and the latter from two words signifying to *carry the logs*. If this be a true etymology, the words form a proverbial phrase, *hewing and lugging*, borrowed from the dialect of the primitive fellers of forests. Very applicable, for Paul is here an aboriginal feller of moral forests.—*Whedon.* **Night and day**—By *night*, that he might preach and visit by day; but also by *day*, that he might make sure of his *three Sabbath days* of synagogue service. Acts 17. 2.



## Authorized Version.

9 Not <sup>6</sup> because we have not power, but to make ourselves an ensample <sup>7</sup> unto you to follow us.

10 For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that <sup>8</sup> if any would not work, neither should he eat.

11 For we hear that there are some which walk among you <sup>9</sup> disorderly, working not at all, but are busybodies.

12 Now them that are such we command and exhort by our Lord Je'sus Christ, <sup>10</sup> that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread.

\* Matt. 10. 10; 1 Tim. 5. 17.—<sup>7</sup> 1 Peter 5. 2.—<sup>8</sup> Gen. 3. 19; 1 Thes. 4. 11.—<sup>9</sup> Isa. 56. 10.—<sup>10</sup> Rom. 12. 11.

9. Not because we have not power [Rev. Ver., *the right*.]—When our Lord first sent out the Twelve to preach, he said unto them, (Matt. 10. 9.) "The workman is worthy of his meat," and by so saying conferred on his apostles a right to demand maintenance from those to whom they preached. This right Paul did not insist on among the Thesalonians, but wrought for his own maintenance while he preached to them. Lest, however, his enemies might think this an acknowledgment that he was no apostle, he here asserted his right, and told them that he had demanded no maintenance from them, to make himself a pattern to them of prudent industry.—*Macknight*. **Make ourselves an ensample**—Literal Greek, *We may give ourselves a type*.—*Whedon*.

10. This we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat [Rev. Ver., *If any will not work, neither let him eat*.]—The apostle does not say that whoever does not work shall not eat. That were harsh and unmerciful. For many a man does not work who yet should eat; the old, who have passed their life in labor, and whose strength for labor has thus been exhausted, these have an honorable place reserved for them at the table of the prosperous; those, in like manner, who, through bodily or mental infirmity, are incapacitated for work, have a free seat at the table of love; and, lastly, such as would fain labor, but just at present they find no work; they themselves beg; "Give us not bread, give us work; we desire to eat our own bread;" to them work should be given, but, until that is found, they should not be left to perish. Only to those who *will* not work does the apostle's injunction apply.—*Ruggenbach*. **He should not eat**—That is,

## Revised Version.

9 you: not because we have not the right, but to make ourselves an ensample unto you, that ye should imitate us. For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, If any will not work, neither let him

11 eat. For we hear of some that walk among you disorderly, that work

12 not at all, but are busybodies. Now them that are such we command and exhort in the Lord Je'sus Christ, that with quietness they work, and 13 eat their own bread. But ye, breth-

at the public expense. They should not be supported by the Church.

11. For we hear—It is not known in what way this was made known to Paul, whether by Timothy, or by some other one. He had no doubt of its truth, and he seems to have been prepared to believe it the more readily from what he saw when he was among them.—*Earnes*. **Working not . . . but busybodies**—This sentence has a peculiar play upon words, and is variously translated by different scholars, as: *Robinson*—"Doing nothing, but overdoing; not busy in work, but busybodies;"—*Conybeare*—"Busbodies who do no business;"—*Jowett*—"Busy only with what is not their own business;" *Webster* and *Wilkinson*—"Working nothing, but overworking;" *Whedon*—"Not business men, but busybodies." It was not a solemn giving over of business, and attending exclusively to religious exercises; nor even an overdone religious dissipation; but a lounging and gadding spirit of meddling gossip, impudently devouring the charities of the Church.

12. Command—A command on which a penalty depends. **Exhort**—A tenderer word, appealing to their own sense of Christian duty.—*Whedon*. **With quietness**—May be taken either subjectively—with a quiet mind—or, objectively, *with quiet*, i. e., in outward peace. The former is most probable, as addressed to the offenders themselves.—*Alford*. **Eat their own bread**—From this paragraph it is clear that Paul held that the possible nearness of the advent should, with Christians, not change the tenor of life. The artisan should ply his trade, the scholar his books, and the farmer cultivate the soil, as usual. *We should, indeed, live as holily as if the advent were to be to-day, but as*

## Authorized Version.

13 But ye, brethren, <sup>d</sup> be not weary in well-doing.

14 And if any man obey not our word <sup>e</sup> by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed.

15 Yet <sup>11</sup> count *him* not as an enemy, but admonish *him* as a brother.

16 Now the Lord of peace himself give you peace always by all means. The Lord *be* with you all.

17 The salutation of Paul with mine own hand, which is the token in every epistle: so I write.

<sup>d</sup> Or, faint not.—<sup>e</sup> Or, signify that man by an epistle—<sup>11</sup> Lev. 19, 17.

*practically as if the world were to last forever.—Whedon.*

**13. Be not weary in well-doing**—We understand the phrase as comprehensively as possible—as including, therefore, both their own unblamable walk, steady, loving, earnest discipline, (verses 14, 15,) and also a due beneficence. Suffer not yourselves by any means to become weary in the performance of your duty; act in every way as followers of God. After many disturbing, discouraging experiences of dishonesty, unworthiness, sloth, abuse of kindness, it is necessary to check the growth of displeasure and distrust, lest those who are in real distress should have to suffer innocently.—*C. J. Rigenbach*. [Alford, however, takes a different view of the passage.] *Well-doing*, from the context, cannot mean “*doing good*,” (to others,) but *doing well*, living diligently and uprightly: see also Gal. 6. 9, where the same general sentiment occurs.—*Alford*.

**14, 15. If any man obey not**—As was evident some had not obeyed the injunctions contained in the former epistle. Paul adds a fresh warning to those who prove disobedient a second time. **Note that man**—Literally, *Mark*. The ordinary meaning of the word: put a *mark* on him, by noticing him for the sake of avoidance.—*Alford*. **Have no company with him**—See notes on verse 6. **May be ashamed**—The feeling proper for conduct which is a violation of Christian honor and self-respect, and conducive to the appropriate spirit of repentance.—*Whedon*. **As an enemy**—Indulge no hatred; do him all the good in your power. **Admonish him as a brother**—The offender is a man and a brother still; he is to be followed with tender sympathy and prayer, and the hearts and the arms of the Christian brotherhood are to be open

## Revised Version.

ren, be not weary in well-doing.

14 And if any man obeyeth not our word by this epistle, note that man, that ye have no company with him, to the end that he may be ashamed.

15 And *yet* count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother.

16 Now the Lord of peace himself give you peace at all times in all ways. The Lord be with you all.

17 The salutation of me Paul with mine own hand, which is the token

18 in every epistle: so I write. The

to receive him again when he gives any evidence of repenting. There was necessity for this caution. There is great danger that when we undertake the work of discipline we shall forget that he who is the subject of it is a brother, and that we shall regard and treat him as an enemy.—*Barnes*.

**16. The Lord of peace**—He who is its author and the source from which it flows is here called upon to bestow it: “The Lord of peace himself give you peace.”—*E. M. Goulburn*. The apostle calls Christ “the Lord of peace,” in allusion to Isa. 9. 6, where he is foretold under the character of “the Prince of peace,” because he was to reconcile Jews and Gentiles to God and to one another, making peace between God and them; and “making of two one new man,” whose members are to live in peace with one another.—*Macknight*. **Give you peace**—*Peace* must not be understood only of *peace with one another*: for there has been no special mention of mutual disagreement in this epistle; but of *peace in general*, outward and inward, here and hereafter, as in Rom. 14.—*Alford*. An appropriate title in the prayer here, where the harmony of the Christian community was liable to interruption from the “disorderly.”—*D. Brown*. **By all means**—In every way; by the mutual performance of every duty.

**17. With mine own hand**—So far by amanuensis; now by autograph.—*Whedon*. **The token**—The sign of genuineness, as coming from Paul. All the more important, since some one had forged an epistle in his name. Chap. 2. 2. **In every epistle**—Some think he signed his name to every epistle with his own hand; but as there is no trace of this in any MSS. of *all* the epistles, it is more likely that he alludes to *his writing with his own hand in*

## Authorized Version.

18 The grace of our Lord Je'sus Christ be with you all. Amen.

*closing every epistle*, even in those epistles (Romans, 2 Corinthians, Ephesians, Philippians, 1 Thessalonians) wherein he does not specify his having done so.—*D. Brown*. This would indicate that he had already written other epistles which have not come down to us. **So I write**—This is my penmanship. The apostle's autograph probably included verses 17, 18.—*Whedon*.

**18. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ**—*Grace* is one of Paul's key-words, and used frequently in the epistles. It means *favor, mercy*; and expresses the fact that salvation comes wholly by the divine mercy to men, and not by merit on our part. *Grace* is the divine attitude toward us sinners from which comes *peace* as a result to us. **Be with you all**—Wordsworth remarks, that of the thirteen epistles to which the name of Paul is prefixed, all contain near the close the formula, "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you." During Paul's life no one else, he says, "ever used this formula; but after his death it was appropriated by John in the Apocalypse, and by St. Clement at the close of his epistle to the Corinthians." Hence he infers that this formula was that "salutation of Paul with mine own hand," of which the apostle speaks, and was always autographic.—*Whedon*. **Amen**—[This word, and the subscription following it, are omitted in the Revised Version.] From the subscription to this epistle, it purports to have been "written from Athens." This is probably incorrect, as there is reason to think that it was written from Corinth. At all events, this subscription is of no authority.—*Barnes*.

## Authorities to be Consulted.

See Commentaries and Introductions on Thessalonians, under Lesson XI; and also Sermons, by F. W. Robertson, Waiting for the Second Advent; W. H. Pinnoek, Christ our King; O. Dewey, The Passion for a Fortune; H. W. Beecher, (Lectures to Young Men,) Idleness. *Foster's Cyclopaedia of Illustrations*, ver. 1: 2638, 4572; 2: 1434; 3: 8607, 9015; 4: 7401; 5: 4345; 7: 3802; 8: 9551; 10: 5728, 8773; 11: 3513, 514; 12: 12273; 13: 3516.

## Practical Thoughts.

[CHRISTIAN DILIGENCE.]

1. The Christian should be diligent in his intercessions for the Gospel, and for those who labor in it. Ver. 1.

## Revised Version.

grace of our Lord Je'sus Christ be with you all.

2. The Christian should be diligent in his obedience to the precepts of the Gospel. Ver. 4.
3. The Christian should be diligent in a patient waiting for the will of the Lord. Ver. 5.
4. The Christian should be diligent in fidelity to the order and discipline of the Church. Vers. 6, 7.
5. The Christian should be diligent in secular business, having some employment and faithful in it. Vers. 8-10.
6. The Christian should be diligent in doing right toward all, and in doing good unto all. Ver. 13.
7. The Christian should be diligent in kind admonitions to fellow disciples who walk unworthily.

## Sermon Outline.

BY REV. H. SPELLMEYER, D.D.

INTRODUCTORY.—(1) The *sphere* of well-doing is the world. "God so loved the world." "The world is my parish." "Love thy neighbor." (2) The *example* of well-doing is Christ the Lord. "Went about doing good." "He came not to be ministered unto," etc. (3) The *reasons* for well-doing arise from the love of God. "This constraineth us." "If God so loved us, we ought also to love one another." (4) The *results* of well-doing can only be revealed in eternity. "In due season, if we faint not." (5) The *rewards* of well-doing are "the kingdom of heaven." "Well done . . . enter thou into the kingdom," etc.

I. God supplies the possibility of well-doing. Time, talents, opportunities are from him. "Therefore in him we are accountable." We must give an account for every deed done in the body.

II. The life of every man is one of *ill-doing* or *well-doing*. "None of us liveth to himself."

III. There can be little *well-doing* without *well-being*. Good deeds are but the expression of a good life. "A good tree bringeth forth good fruit."

IV. *Well-doing* is not necessarily *great-doing*. "She hath done what she could."

V. The path to earthly immortality lies in *well-doing*. The good we do lives after us.

And yet there are many causes for weariness in well-doing. Among such are (a) the magnitude of the work to be done in heathen lands and even at home. (b) Deficient co-operation. A spiritual indolence in the Church. "The laborers are few." (c) The opposition of evil, (1) in the heart, (2) in society. "What have we to do with thee?" (d) The small success of even our best efforts. Many a soul eludes us. Men are likened to fish by Christ. (e) Ingratitude. Charities are often forgotten. Only one

of the ten lepers returned to praise the Lord. (f) The irksomeness of self-denial. Even Christians have to watch their zeal lest it grow cold.

VI. The apostolic exhortation is "Be not weary," etc. Because (1) God measures motives, impulses. He rewards the intent. (2) God sees results which we do not see. There are secondary causes we have originated which are working still. (3) The love of Christ should arouse our energies. What if he had grown weary? (4) There

is in all well-doing discipline and a strengthening of personal character, even if the result is not reached. (5) We know that in this way we please God. This should be motive enough. (6) We know God is on our side. "Co-laborers." Victory is certain. Uncertainty as to the outcome is always disheartening. But we are on the side of final conquest. (7) We know our rewards are certain. We ought to work on principle, but knowing our weakness, God offers a "prize."

## SECOND QUARTER.

### STUDIES IN THE ACTS AND EPISTLES.

A. D. 54.]

## LESSON I.

[April 6.

PAUL'S THIRD MISSIONARY JOURNEY.—Acts 18. 23-28 ; 19. 1-7.

**GOLDEN TEXT.**—And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them.—ACTS 19. 6.

**TIME.**—A. D. 54. Nero, emperor of Rome; Quadratus, prefect of Syria; Felix, procurator of Judea; Ananias, high-priest of the Jews.

**PLACE.**—Ephesus, in Asia Minor.

**CONNECTING LINKS.**—(1) Paul on his way to Palestine, stops at Ephesus. Acts 18. 18-21. (2) Paul's visit to Caesarea, Jerusalem, and Antioch. Chap. 18. 22.

**INTRODUCTION.**—About autumn of A. D. 54, leaving Antioch, Paul commences revisitation of the country of Galatia and Phrygia, confirming the Churches. Thence, after spending a ministry of three years in Ephesus, he journeys through Macedonia into southern Greece, where he spends three winter months at his farthest point, the city of Corinth. Returning he passes through Macedonia and, embarking at Philippi, crosses over to Troas. Thence by sea he skirts by the coasts of Asia Minor, through the Aegean isles; and, crossing the Mediterranean, comes to Tyre, Ptolemais, and Caesarea, and thence by land to Jerusalem. It occupied a period not far, more or less, from four years.—*Whe-don*.

## Authorized Version.

23 And after he had spent some time *there*, he departed, and went over *all* the country of <sup>1</sup>Ga-la'ti-a and Phryg'i-a in order, strengthening <sup>2</sup>all the disciples.

<sup>1</sup> Gal. 1. 2; 4. 14.—<sup>2</sup> Isa. 35. 3; 1 Thess. 3. 2.

23. Some time *there*—At Antioch. A brief visit of respect sometimes suffices for Jerusalem; but *some time* of residence indicates that the apostle is at home in Antioch.—*Whe-don*. Galatia—One of the central provinces of Asia Minor, inhabited by a Gallie race. Paul had planted the Gospel there on his second journey. See First Quarter, Lesson V, ver. 6, notes. Phrygia—A central province, visited by Paul on his first journey. See Acts 14.

## Revised Version.

23 And having spent some time *there*, he departed, and went through the region of Ga-la'ti-a and Phryg'i-a in order, establishing all the disciples.

We may suppose that Paul went first to Tarsus, thence in a north-western direction through Galatia, and then, turning to the south-west, passed through Phrygia, and so on to Ephesus. That course accounts for Luke's naming Galatia before Phrygia instead of the order of chap. 16. 6.—*Dr. Hackett*. In order—Implies that he regularly visited the Churches, each as they lay in his route.—*Alford*. Strengthening [Rev. Ver., *stablishing*] all the disciples—Giving

## Authorized Version.

24 And <sup>1</sup>a certain Jew named A-pol'-los, born at Al-ex-an'dri-a, an eloquent man, and mighty in the Scriptures, came to Eph'e-sus.

25 This man was instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent <sup>4</sup>in

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. 1. 12; 1. 6; Titus 3. 13. — <sup>4</sup> Rom. 12. 11.

them such encouragement as they needed, in a remote region, where they enjoyed but little contact with other Churches.



24. A certain Jew named Apollos—Of whom nothing is known besides the information here given, except the facts, that his eloquence attracted many at Corinth who would fain have made him the leader of a Christian sect in the Church, (1 Cor. 3. 4,) that he would not permit it, and probably for this reason refused to return to Corinth, though earnestly urged to do so by Paul, (1 Cor. 16. 12,) who testifies his regard for him in Titus 3. 13. He is regarded by some critics as the author of the epistle to the Hebrews. — *L. Abbott.* Born at Alexandria [Rev. Ver., *An Alexandrian by race.*]—A celebrated city and sea-port of Egypt on the Mediterranean, twelve miles from the mouth of the river Nile, named in honor of Alexander the Great, who founded it B. C. 332. It was built upon a strip of land between the sea and Lake Mareotis, and connected with the isle of Pharos by a long mole nearly a mile in length. Two main streets, two hundred and forty feet wide, crossing each other at right angles in the middle of the city, left a free passage for the sea-breezes. Though mentioned in the New Testament only incidentally in the Book of Acts, (chaps. 6. 9; 27. 6,) it exerted a powerful influence on the history of the development of Christianity. It was a great literary and philosophic center, was the site of the largest library in the world, which under Cleopatra contained 700,000 volumes, was a mother of philosophy and arts, and was a cosmopolitan city, in which Greeks,

## Revised Version.

24 Now a certain Jew named A-pol'-los, an Al-ex-an'dri-an by race, <sup>1</sup>a learned man, came to Eph'e-sus; and he was mighty in the scriptures.

25 This man had been <sup>2</sup>instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fer-

Or, an eloquent man.—<sup>2</sup> Gr. taught by word of mouth.

Egyptians, and Jews had their respective quarters. At this time nearly one third of its population were Jews; they had, however, materially modified their religious belief to conform it to the dreamy philosophy of the Orient, which there found a home.—*L. Abbott.* An eloquent man [Rev. Ver., *A learned man.*]—The Greek adjective implies learning as well as eloquence.—*Plumptre.* Mighty in the Scriptures—It is not merely said that he knew the Scriptures, but he was mighty in bringing out their force impressively upon the hearts of men. The truth burning in his own heart fired the hearts of others.—*Whedon.* The Old Testament Scriptures are, of course, here referred to, as the New Testament was not yet written.

25. This man was instructed—The original means, "Taught by word of mouth," and indicates that some person who had heard the account of the Saviour's coming had given Apollos information concerning it. Yet it was in very imperfect degree, for he knew only the merest rudiments of the Gospel. Probably he had received instruction from a disciple of John the Baptist, and had gathered from hearsay only a few facts about the life of Christ.—*Editor.* In his native Alexandria perhaps some disciple of John, having left Judea before the zenith of Jesus' ministry, may have unfolded to him the truths with which John had shaken the multitudes of Israel. The kingdom of God is at hand; the prophetic period for the coming One is expiring; the world spiritually, and perhaps physically, is to be destroyed and renewed. With such truths and bold conceptions Apollos' oratory no doubt, like that of John, could sway the multitudes.—*Whedon.* Way of the Lord—*Of the Lord,* not of Jesus, but, according to the Old Testament, of Jehovah. So John was to prepare the way of the Lord—Jehovah. Apollos had not yet distinctly learned of Jesus.—*Whedon.* Fervent in the spirit—Rom. 12. 11. This cannot be understood of the Holy Spirit, for his gifts are the seal of Christian faith, and that Apollos had not yet embraced in its fullness. But it refers to the native warmth and earnestness of his nature. Though but partially in-

## Authorized Version.

the spirit, he spake and taught diligently the things of the Lord, knowing only the baptism of John.

26 And he began to speak boldly in the synagogue: whom when Aq'ui-la and Pris-cil'la had heard, they took him unto them, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly.

<sup>8</sup>Chap. 19. 3.

structed, he received the Gospel with all his heart. **Spake and taught diligently** [Rev. Ver., *carefully*.]—Not *diligently*, as in our version, but *accurately*. He taught accurately, according to the measure of his knowledge. His knowledge, however, is limited by the statement which follows, "knowing only the baptism of John."—*Gloag*. **Knowing only the baptism of John**—The position of Apollos at this stage was, it would seem, that of one who knew the facts of our Lord's life and death and resurrection, and had learned, comparing these with Messianic prophecies, to accept him as the Christ. But his teacher had been one who had not gone beyond the stand-point of the followers of the Baptist, who accepted Jesus as the Christ during his ministry on earth. The Christ was for him the head of a glorified Judaism, retaining all its distinctive features. He had not as yet learned that "circumcision was nothing," (1 Cor. 7. 19; Gal. 5. 6,) and that the temple and all its ordinances were "decaying and waxing old, and ready to vanish away." Heb. 8. 13.—*Plumptre*. Our own opinion is that he knew only so much of Christ as John the Baptist could teach him, and that was, that he was soon to appear, or had already come—"one among you," said the Baptist. He had accepted the teachings of John concerning righteousness, obedience to God, the uselessness of mere formal worship, etc. He was in the eager, expectant condition of one who knew that the Lord was at hand. But in our view he had never heard of the death, resurrection, or ascension of Jesus. He was fully acquainted with the Old Testament prophecies, and ready to see their fulfillment in Jesus as soon as it should be pointed out to him. And he possessed the candid nature which would fit him to become a disciple as soon as the truth should be brought to his knowledge.

A fervent spirit, a good knowledge of the Bible, and a search in it always for the things concerning Christ, are the elements that give power in its use. Observe, too, that, ignorant as he was in

## Revised Version.

vent in spirit, he spake, and taught carefully the things concerning Jesus, knowing only the baptism of John: and he began to speak boldly in the synagogue. But when Priscilla and Aq'ui-la heard him, they took him unto them, and expounded unto him the way of God more care-

almost the first principles of Christian theology, he was powerful through the Scriptures.—*L. Abbott*.

Even a light that is dim is, nevertheless, a light; and he who faithfully applies a few talents that are intrusted to his care shall receive more.—*Lechler*.

26. **To speak boldly**—Any one, invited to do so, might expound in the synagogue. **When Aquila and Priscilla had heard** [Rev. Ver., *Priscilla and Aquila*.]—Aquila and Priscilla remained at Ephesus long enough to salute Paul on his return to that city, and to have him send their salutations thence to the Church at Corinth in the first epistle, chap. 16. 19. The faithful pair had a "church in their house." Afterward, (Rom. 16. 3,) residing at Rome, they are greeted by the apostle himself as having been ready to sacrifice their lives to his, as worthy the thanks of all the Gentile Churches, and as still possessing a "Church in their house." Again they return to Ephesus, and are again greeted by the great apostle. 2 Tim. 4. 19. This is their last New Testament record; but tradition reports their martyrdom by the ax.—*Whedon*. The prominence given to Priscilla in this instruction implies that she was a woman of more than ordinary culture, a student of the older Scriptures, able, with a prophetic insight, to help even the disciple of Philo to understand them better than he had done before.—*Plumptre*. **Took him unto them**—Received Apollos into their home as they had already received Paul. **Expounded unto him**—Aquila and Priscilla would inform him of the resurrection of Christ, the effects of his death, the universality of his religion, and the mission of the Holy Ghost; and thus, from being a disciple of John, Apollos became a disciple of Christ, and an eloquent preacher of Christianity.—*Gloag*. **More perfectly** [Rev. Ver., *More carefully*.]—The Greek word for *diligently* in verse 5 more properly signifies *accurately*. The same Greek word here is used in the comparative. But if Apollos preached *accurately* at first, how could he be taught to preach

## Authorized Version.

27 And when he was disposed to pass into A-cha'ia, the brethren wrote, exhorting the disciples to receive him: who, when he was come, <sup>1</sup>helped them much which had believed through grace:

28 For he mightily convinced the Jews, and that publicly, <sup>2</sup>showing by the Scriptures that Je'sus was <sup>3</sup>Christ.

\* 1 Cor. 3, 6; 2 Cor. 1, 24.—<sup>1</sup> Chap. 9, 22; 15, 31; 1 Cor. 15, 3, 4.—<sup>2</sup> Or, is the Christ; Gen. 49, 10; Dent. 18, 15; Num. 24, 2; Psa. 16, 9, 10; 22; 132, 11; 188, 7, 14; 9, 6; 53; Jer. 23, 5; Dan. 9, 24; Micah 5, 2; Mat. 3, 1.

*more accurately?* The first *accuracy*, we suppose, was the proper *accuracy* of a Johnite, than which the *accuracy* of a Christian was *more accurate*.—*Whedon*.

Here we discover the reason why the Lord in His providence, when this pair were expelled from Rome, guided their steps to Corinth, where they learned the Gospel from Paul, and then induced them to go with Paul to Ephesus, and remain in that city after their great instructor had left it. The same divine care that brought Philip and the Ethiopian prince together in the desert brought the tent-makers and Apollos together in the city of Ephesus. He was a capacious vessel, and they possessed that word of the Lord with which the vessel must be charged. As soon as they met they imparted, and he received what was lacking to make him an able minister of Jesus Christ. This meeting, which took place on earth, was arranged in heaven.—*Arnot*.

27. When he was disposed [Rev. Ver., *mindcd*.]—The narrative of his teachers seems to have inspired his *fiorent spirit* to visit the



scenes where they have heard Paul preach Jesus, and witnessed his founding a holy Church.—*Whedon*. To pass into Achaia—or Greece, the province east of the Aegean Sea. In the absence of the name of any city in the province, Corinth naturally suggests itself as the place to which he went, (chap. 19, 1), and the mention of Apollos in 1 Cor. 1, 12, turns this into a certainty. He felt, we may believe, that his training in the philosophical thought of Alexandria qualified him to carry on there the work which Paul had begun both there and at Athens.—*Plumptre*. The brethren wrote [Rev. Ver., *Encouraged him, and wrote to the disciples*.]—

## Revised Version.

27 fully. And when he was minded to pass over into A-cha'ia, the brethren encouraged him, and wrote to the disciples to receive him: and when he was come, he <sup>2</sup>helped them much which had believed through grace:

28 for he powerfully confuted the Jews, <sup>4</sup>and that publicly, shewing by the scriptures that Je'sus was the Christ.

<sup>3</sup> Or, helped much through grace them which had believed.—<sup>4</sup> Or, showing publicly.

This is the first instance which we have of a Christian letter of commendation.—*Gloag*. Helped them much—Through his gift for teaching, his eloquence, and great knowledge of Old Testament Scriptures, Apollos greatly helped those that had believed.—*Jacobson*. The best comment on these words is what Paul says in his First Epistle to the Corinthians: "I have planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase." 1 Cor. 3, 6.—*Gloag*. Which had believed through grace—It was through the grace of God, co-operating with the gift of wisdom, that Apollos was able to lead men to a higher stage of thought.—*Plumptre*. Those who at first had believed through grace were now helped by human aid to persevere in faith.—*Whedon*.

28. He mightily convinced [Rev. Ver., *powerfully confuted*] the Jews—He mightily convinced. Or *vehemently*, as in Luke 23, 10; the adverb indicates the character of his speech, as fervid, vehement, impassioned. With this agrees the description of Apollos as an eloquent man, and fervent in the spirit.—*L. Abbott*. The original word is a very forcible one—he *argued down*, as we say—*proved in their teeth*: and then it has also the sense of *continuity*—that this was not done once or twice, but continuously.—*Alford*. Publicly—Whether in synagogue, church apartment, or agora. So popular was Apollos that a party arose with the motto, "I am of Apollos."—*Whedon*. Showing by the Scriptures—Proving from the predictions of the Old Testament; using its expressions for the purpose of establishing the truth of the proposition that Jesus of Nazareth is the Christ.—*Gloag*.

As Apollos does not appear again in the Acts, it may be well to bring together what is known as to his after-history. At Corinth, as has been said, his name was used as the watchword of a party, probably that of the philosophizing Jews and proselytes, as distinguished from the narrower party of the circumcision that rallied round the

## Authorized Version.

1 And it came to pass, that, while A-pol'los was <sup>1</sup>at Cor'inth, Paul having passed through the upper coasts came to Eph'e-sus: and finding certain disciples,

2 He said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And

<sup>1</sup> Cor. 1. 12.

name of Cephas. 1 Cor. 1. 12. Not a word escapes from Paul that indicates any doctrinal difference between himself and Apollos, and as the latter had been instructed by Paul's friends, Aquila and Priscilla, this was, indeed, hardly probable. It would appear from 1 Cor. 16. 12, that he returned to Ephesus, probably with letters of commendation from the Church of Corinth. 2 Cor. 3. 1. Paul's confidence in him is shown by his desire that he should return once more to Corinth with Stephanus and Fortunatus and Achaicus. His own reluctance to be the occasion even of the semblance of schism explains his unwillingness to go. 1 Cor. 16. 12. After this we lose sight of him for some years. These, we may believe, were well filled up by evangelizing labors after the pattern of those which we have seen at Ephesus and Corinth. Toward the close of Paul's ministry (A. D. 65) we get our last glimpse of him in Titus 3. 13. He is in company with Zenas, the lawyer, (see the same word as in Matt. 22. 35,) one, *i. e.*, who, like himself, had a special reputation for the profounder knowledge of the Law of Moses. Paul's feeling toward him is still, as of old, one of affectionate interest, and he desires that Titus will help him in all things. He has been laboring at Crete, and there also has gathered round him a distinct company of disciples whom Paul distinguishes from his own: "Let ours also learn to maintain good works." Titus 3. 14. After this, probably after Paul's death, he wrote—if we accept Luther's conjecture—the Epistle to the Hebrews.—*Plumptre.*

1. Having passed through the upper coasts [Rev. Ver., *upper country*.]—This implies a route passing from Galatia and Phrygia through the interior, and coming thence to Ephesus. The *coast*, in the modern sense of the term, Paul did not even approach.—*Plumptre.* Came to Ephesus [For an account of Ephesus, see Introduction to the next lesson.]—The unquestioned facts in the case are these: Paul coming from Corinth, from six to nine months before, stopped at Ephesus, and preached one sermon in the synagogue, produced a favorable impression, but declined to remain. Chap. 18. 19-21. If we take his sermon at Antioch, in Pisidia, (chap. 13,) as a type of his preaching to the Jews, and it is the only fully reported ser-

## Revised Version.

19 And it came to pass, that, while A-pol'los was at Cor'inth, Paul having passed through the upper country came to Eph'e-sus, and found 2 certain disciples: and he said unto them, Did ye receive the Holy Ghost when ye believed? And they said

mon to his own countrymen which we possess, he did not undertake to set the whole Christian system before them, but simply the truths: (1) That Jesus is the Messiah; (2) that through him, by repentance, is remission of sins; nothing was probably said about the Trinity, the gift of the Holy Ghost, the form or nature of baptism, or Church order or organization. Having planted this seed, the apostle departed. He was followed by Apollos; but Apollos knew the facts of Christianity only by rumor, and very imperfectly, (chap. 18. 24-28,) and nothing concerning the gift of the Holy Ghost, or the nature of Christian baptism.—*L. Abbott.* Finding certain disciples—As a result of the preaching of Paul and Apollos a few Jews had accepted the truth that Jesus is the Messiah, and had been baptized as a symbol of repentance, perhaps by Apollos, certainly with a baptism like that of John; that inasmuch as they accepted Jesus as the Messiah, they are recognized as disciples, that is, pupils, though ignorant of some of the fundamental principles of Christian theology; that they received no further instruction from Apollos, who proceeded immediately to Greece, nor from Aquila and Priscilla, who were not rabbis, and had no opportunity to teach what they knew, publicly, in the synagogue.—*L. Abbott.*

2. He said unto them—We are left to conjecture what prompted the question. The most natural explanation is, that Paul noticed in them, as they attended the meetings of the Church, a want of spiritual gifts, perhaps, also, a want of the peace and joy and brightness that showed itself in others.—*Plumptre.* Have ye received the Holy Ghost [Rev. Ver., *Did ye receive the Holy Ghost when ye believed*.]—*On your becoming believers, had ye the gifts of the Spirit conferred on you?* as in chap. 8. 16, 17. This is both grammatically necessary and absolutely demanded by the sense; the inquiry being, not as to any reception of the Holy Ghost during the period *since* their baptism, but as to one simultaneous with their first reception into the Church; and their *not* having then received him



## Authorized Version.

they said unto him, <sup>2</sup> We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost.

3 And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto <sup>3</sup> John's baptism.

4 Then said Paul, <sup>4</sup> John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Je'sus.

5 When they heard *this*, they were baptized <sup>5</sup> in the name of the Lord Je'sus.

<sup>2</sup> Chap. 8. 16; 1 Sam. 3. 7.—<sup>3</sup> Chap. 18. 25.—<sup>4</sup> Chap. 1. 5; 11. 16; 13. 24.—<sup>5</sup> Gal. 3. 27.

is accounted for by the *deficiency of their baptism*.—*Alford*. They said unto him, We have not heard [Rev. Ver., *Nay, we did not hear*.]—The stress of the sentence is on *hearing*; so far from *receiving* the Holy Ghost, they did not even *hear* of his existence.—*Alford*. Whether there be any Holy Ghost [Rev. Ver., *Whether the Holy Ghost was given*.]—They believed that Jesus was the promised Messiah; but the further truth that another Comforter had come, who was given for light and life to all that would receive him, (chap. 2. 38, 39,) they had heard nothing of.—*L. Abbott*.

The Church still contains many Ephesian Christians, who believe in God the Father, and Christ as the Redeemer, but not practically in a Holy Spirit, on whom they may daily and hourly rely, and in whose inspiration and guidance there is perfect liberty.—*L. Abbott*.

3. **Unto what**—Christ had commanded his disciples to baptize into the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. Matt. 28. 19.—*L. Abbott*. How is it possible to receive the seal without feeling the impression?—*Bishop Downham*. **Unto John's baptism**—They were practically disciples of the Baptist, believing in Jesus as the Christ, and thinking that this constituted a sufficient qualification for communion with the Church of Christ.—*Pumptre*. Possibly they had been taught by Apollos before his fuller instruction by Aquila and Priscilla.—*Johnson*.

4. **John verily baptized**—With what reverence the apostle here speaks of John! He does not attempt to depreciate that servant of God, but refers to the divine office which he held in his day, and shows that if men did not derive advantage from it, the cause could not be attributed to John.—*Brandt*. **With the baptism**

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unto him, Nay, we did not so much as hear whether <sup>1</sup> the Holy Ghost was

3 *given*. And he said, Into what then were ye baptized? And they said,

4 Into John's baptism. And Paul said, John baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Je'sus. And when they heard this, they were baptized into the name of

<sup>1</sup> Or, *there is a Holy Ghost*.

of repentance—The point of contrast is not between John and Christ personally, but between the *water* baptism of John unto *repentance* and the promised baptism of the Spirit from the hands of his coming Master unto *new life*.—*D. Brown*. They should believe . . . on Christ [Rev. Ver., *on Jesus*.]—The distinctive point in it was, that the baptism of John was, by his own declaration, simply provisional and preparatory. He taught his disciples to believe in Jesus, and belief implied obedience, and obedience baptism in his name.—*Pumptre*. Yet when Messiah came he required a new baptism, obligating a consecration to him, whereby the Spirit of promise would be poured out upon them, and they be emancipated into the full liberty of the sons of God.—*Whedon*.

John's baptism was the baptism of repentance, of mortification; Christ's baptism is the baptism of revival, of vivification.—*Melanchthon*.

5. **When they heard this**—That is, the fuller expositions of the great truth briefly stated in verse 4. **They were baptized**—The natural meaning of the passage is that these disciples were rebaptized with the Christian baptism, either by Paul himself or by some of his associates. It is disputed whether this rebaptism was the general rule, or only an exception; whether those who were baptized by the baptism of John were, as a matter of course, rebaptized on their believing in Christ. The apostles, certainly, several of whom were baptized by John, do not appear to have received the Christian baptism; but, then, they were the disciples of Christ before the institution of baptism. The same may be affirmed of the original disciples before the day of Pentecost. On the other hand, the numerous converts who were converted on

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6 And when Paul had <sup>6</sup> laid *his* hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they <sup>7</sup> spake with tongues, and prophesied.

7 And all the men were about twelve.

<sup>6</sup> Chap. 6. 6; <sup>2</sup> Tim. 1. 6.—<sup>7</sup> Chap. 2. 4.

that day were all baptized as a matter of course, and no inquiry was made as to whether they had or had not received the baptism of John, although it is almost certain that among such a great multitude there were some of John's disciples.—*Gloag.*

6. When Paul had laid—Ordinarily the imposition of apostolic hands conveyed gifts, but not invariably. Apollos had them without it, and Cornelius before he was even baptized.—*W. Jacobson.*

The Holy Ghost came upon them—A certain influence, manifestly divine, enriching their experience and endowing with peculiar power. As this form of miracle has ceased it is impossible to define it precisely.

Spake with tongues—We have here a *miniature Pentecost*, a new outpouring of the charismatic Spirit upon a new twelve.—*Whedon.* What was said was not in the way of instruction, but in rapturous thanksgiving for their having been grafted into Christ's Church.—*Jacobson.*

Prophesied—Received illumination which enabled them to understand Scripture and to explain doctrines. Prophecy was not always, nor often, a power to foretell the future, but rather a power to speak with inspiration concerning the Gospel.

When the *Holy Ghost* shines upon our souls, part of the grace he inspires is absorbed to our own particular comfort; part of it is reflected back in acts of love, and joy, and prayer, and praise; and part of it is reflected every way in acts of benevolence, beneficence, and all moral and social duty.—*Toplady.*

7. All the men were about twelve [Rev. Ver., *They were in all about twelve men.*]—Apparently they were all *men*. Of their previous and subsequent history nothing is known, and nothing of their character except what can be deduced from the language of the historian here. From their ignorance concerning the Holy Ghost, whose presence and influence is a matter of Old Testament teaching, it is surmised that they were of Gentile rather than of Jewish extraction, but this is far from certain.—*L. Abbott.*

We see here: (1) The nature of Christian experience. This is not merely repentance and acceptance of Christ. It is consummated only by the

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6 the Lord Je'sus. And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake  
7 with tongues, and prophesied. And they were in all about twelve men.

reception of a personal, present, and continuous gift of the Holy Ghost, as the power of a new life, to be maintained in, with, and by God, in which we have the liberty of the sons of God, being brought into his likeness by his indwelling. (2) The nature of Christian baptism. This is not a mere symbolic act by which the recipient publicly confesses his sins, and his acceptance of Jesus as the Christ. It also symbolizes the mutual act of God and man by which the latter is received into covenant with the Father, has his sins washed away through the Son, and receives, as the principle and power of his future life, the gift of the *Holy Ghost*.—*L. Abbott.*

#### Authorities to be Consulted.

Schaff's Apostolic Church, p. 276. Farrar's St. Paul, chap. xxxi. Conybeare and Howson, chap. xiv. Sunday Magazine, (1870,) p. 234. Lesson Helps for 1877, Third Quarter. Sermons, by F. W. Robertson, The Word and the World; R. Hawker, Did the Holy Spirit Manifest Himself Before the Time of Christ? Foster's Cyclopaedia of illustrations, [numbers marked with a star refer to poetical quotations,] ver. 24: \*1057, 1864; 25: 8328; 26: 462; 28: 663; 1: \*3403; 2: 3002, 9562; 3: 268, 6683; 4: 4963, \*3629; 5: 6685; 6: 9563.

#### Practical Thoughts.

[THE ELEMENTS OF POWER IN CHRISTIAN WORK.]

1. One element of power in working for Christ is an earnest and fervent nature. Vers. 24, 25.
2. An element of power is a thorough knowledge of the word of God. Vers. 24, 25.
3. An element of power is boldness in testimony, bearing witness to the truth as far as it is apprehended. Vers. 25, 26.
4. An element of power is the teachable spirit, ready to receive light from any source, and instruction from the humblest teachers. Vers. 26, 27.
5. An element of power is strong reliance upon Scripture, basing argument upon the word. Ver. 28.
6. An element of power is the discerning spirit, looking closely into experiences, and seeking to test all by the Gospel privilege. Ver. 2.

7. An element of power, mightiest of all, is the presence of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of believers. Ver. 6.

Sermon Outline.

A fragment of a petrified fish-scale was found by Agassiz to reveal much information concerning the geological formation from which came its size, shape, and history. So this fragment of the biography of Apollos gives a revelation concerning one of the unknown great men in the early Church.

I. The life of Apollos. II. His character.

1. He was born at Alexandria, a cosmopolitan city, where a third of the population were Jews—Jews of a broader type than the Pharisees of Jerusalem—acquainted with literature, thoughtful, and intelligent. Here Apollos grew up, breathing a liberal atmosphere.

2. He was a student of the Old Testament, not only acquainted with its history, poetry, philosophy, prophecy, but able to see beneath the surface and interpret the inner meaning of the word.

3. He became a follower of John the Baptist, accepting the coming of Christ as near at hand, and ready to believe in him; seeking a righteous life rather than hollow forms. He was still standing in the twilight of the Baptist's teaching fifteen years after Jesus had died, risen, and ascended, and in this state came to Ephesus, just missing Paul, bore testimony to the faith as he held it, and received the instruction of Priscilla and Aquila.

4. He accepted Christ. All his Bible lore contributed to his sudden entrance from twilight into noon; for he saw new meaning in the truth.

5. He bore bold and strong testimony. At Ephesus, and afterward at Corinth, his learning and eloquence made him mighty for the truth.

6. He refused to become a rival to Paul. When an "Apollos party" gathered around his teachings at Corinth he left the city and refused to return. This is the last mention of him, except that, years afterward, Paul wrote, "Bring Apollos," etc., (Titus 3, 13,) showing that the old friendship remained.

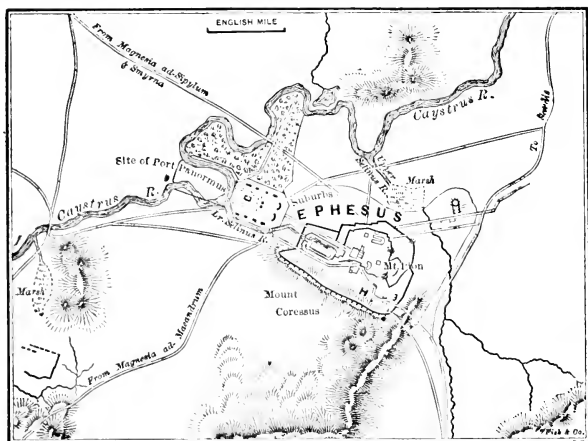
II. Apollos shows the elements of a broad Christian character, having the following traits:

1. An intelligent Christianity. His was no ignorant, narrow type, but thoughtful, having the word as its basis.

2. An earnest Christianity. "Fervent in spirit." This combination of intelligence and fervency is greatly needed in the religion of our day.

3. A working Christianity. He bore testimony at each step of the way. By speaking from the stand-point of the Baptist he prepared the way for the higher life of a Christian; and there, too, he spoke boldly for the faith.

4. A teachable, lowly Christianity. Great as he is in the synagogue, he is greater as he sits in the humble home of the tent-maker to receive instruction, and greatest of all as he turns from honors offered to him at Corinth because they were at the expense of the Apostle Paul.



A. D. 54.]

LESSON II.

[April 13.

PAUL AT EPHESUS.—Acts 19. 8-22.

**GOLDEN TEXT.**—And many that believed came, and confessed, and showed their deeds.—  
ACTS 19. 18.

TIME.—A. D. 54 to 57, a period of three years immediately following the time of the last lesson. For rulers, see Lesson I.

PLACE.—Ephesus, in Asia Minor.

INTRODUCTION. *The city of Ephesus.*—Descending from the upper coasts, that is, the Phrygian and Galatian highlands, near the high sources whence the Meander and Cayster flow down to the sea on both sides of Ephesus, as Paul moved down from the east, he would behold the city lying on a plateau, less than five miles square, flanked on the left by the long mountain ridges of the Coressus and the Prion, along whose summit the city wall extended, with the buildings lining the lower slopes. Nearer at hand, on the margin of the slope, stood the theater, so memorable in Paul's history, whose remains are the largest of the kind extant. More distant, and near the harbor, was the temple of Diana, one of the wonders of the world. Beyond was the blue Egean, which Paul had so lately crossed on his voyage from Corinth, and which he was soon to recross on a brief visit to that same Corinth. The great religious characteristic which Paul was to encounter in Ephesus was the overwhelming power of the worship of the great goddess Diana.—*Whedon.* The remains of Ephesus are partly covered with rubbish and overgrown with vegetation. They have been visited by many travelers, and the ruins are full of interest to antiquarians. The site is now an utter desolation. Lewin says that in 1862 he could not even find a hut on the site of the capital of Asia. The only inhabitants within her walls were the beasts of the field and the fowls of the air.—*L. Abbott.* *Paul's ministry at Ephesus.*—This little handful of incidents is all that Luke was enabled to preserve for us of this great Ephesian visit, which Paul himself tells us occupied a period of three years. Had we nothing else to go by, we might suppose that until the final outbreak it was a period of almost unbroken success and prosperity. Such, however, as we find from the epistles and from the apostle's speech to the Ephesian elders, was very far from being the case. It was, indeed, an earnest, incessant, laborious, house-to-house ministry, which carried its exhortations to each individual member of the Church. But it was a ministry of many tears; and though greatly blessed, it was a time of such overwhelming trial, sickness, persecution, and misery, that it probably surpassed in sorrow any other period of Paul's life. We must suppose that during its course happened not a few of those perils which he recounts with such passionate brevity of allusion in his Second Epistle to the Corinthians.—*Farrar.*

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8 And <sup>1</sup>he went into the synagogue, and spake boldly for the space of three months, disputing and persuading the things <sup>2</sup>concerning the kingdom of God.

<sup>1</sup> Chap. 17. 2.—<sup>2</sup> Chap. 1. 3; 23. 23.

8. He went into the synagogue—We pause for a moment to think of the amount of work of all kinds implied in this short record. The daily labor as a tent-maker went on as before, (chap. 20. 34.) probably still in partnership with Aquila and Priscilla. The Sabbaths saw the apostle evening and morning in the synagogues preaching, as he had done elsewhere, that Jesus was the Christ, and setting forth the nature of his work and the laws of his kingdom.—*Plumptre.* **Space of three months.**—When Paul paid his brief visit (chap. 18. 20, 21) to Ephesus the Jews seemed to welcome him, and desired his stay. He now returns, and is

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8 And he entered into the synagogue, and spake boldly for the space of three months, reasoning and persuading *as to* the things concerning the kingdom of God. But when some

heard by them for a period of *three months.*—*Whedon.* **Disputing** [Rev. Ver., *reasoning*] **and persuading**—The first makes the matter clear to the intellect, and the second makes it powerful on the will. The first enables you to know the true, and the second induces you to do the right. These are the two elements of which all right preaching consists. The proportions may vary indefinitely with circumstances, but every sermon should contain, in some measure, both constituents.—*Arnot.* **Concerning the kingdom of God**—To the Jews he spoke of that kingdom of God which all the Jews throughout the world were expecting.—*L. Abbott.*

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9 But <sup>3</sup>when divers were hardened, and believed not, but spake evil <sup>4</sup>of that way before the multitude, he departed from them, and separated the disciples, disputing daily in the school of one Ty-ran'nus.

10 And <sup>6</sup>this continued by the space of two years; so that all they which dwelt in A'si-a heard the word of the Lord Je'sus, both Jews and Greeks.

<sup>2</sup> 2 Tim. 1. 15; <sup>2</sup> Pet. 2. 2; Jude 10.—<sup>4</sup> Chap. 9. 2.—<sup>5</sup> Chap. 20. 31.

9. **Divers were hardened, and believed not** [Rev. Ver., *Some were hardened and disobedient.*—Both the verbs are in the imperfect, indicating that this spiritual condition was gradually developed.—*Jacobson.* **Spake evil of that way** [Rev. Ver., *Of the way.*—A term which seems to have been used familiarly as a synonym for the disciples of Christ. Chaps. 19. 9, 23; 22. 4; 24. 14, 22. It may have originated in the words in which Christ had claimed to be himself the "way," as well as the "truth" and the "life," (John 14. 6.) or in his language as to the "strait way" that led to eternal life, (Matt. 7. 13;) or perhaps again, in the prophecy of Isaiah (chap. 40. 3) cited by the Baptist, (Matt. 3. 3; Mark 1. 3,) as to preparing "the way of the Lord."—*Pumpton.* **Before the multitude**—The unbelieving Jews acted at Ephesus as at Thessalonica, and tried to wreak their hatred against Paul by stirring up suspicion among the Gentiles, especially, as before, among those of the lower class who were always ready for a tumult. **Separated the disciples**—We must remember that Paul, though a Christian, still regarded himself as a true Israelite, and he must have felt, at least as severely as a Luther or a Whitefield, this involuntary alienation from the religious communion of his childhood.—*Farrar.* **School of one Tyrannus**—He may have been the teacher of a Jewish school, such as was generally organized in every city, often in connection with the synagogue, or a Greek sophist converted to Christianity through the labors of Paul, and gladly allowing his school of philosophy or rhetoric to be converted into a school of Christ, or the founder of a school, whose building, hired by Paul for a preaching place, still bore his name; and this last hypothesis seems to me the most probable.—*L. Abbott.*

The apostle in Ephesus was like a magnetic bar thrust into a great heap of rubbish: forthwith all the filings of real steel that existed in the miscellaneous mass were found adhering to its

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were hardened and disobedient, speaking evil of the Way before the multitude, he departed from them, and separated the disciples, reasoning daily in the school of Ty-ran'nus.

10 And this continued for the space of two years; so that all they which dwelt in A'si-a heard the word of the Lord, 11 both Jews and Greeks. And God

sides. The attraction and cohesion of kindred spirits is a beautiful and beneficent law of the new kingdom.—*Arnott.*

10. **Space of two years**—This period refers to the time after Paul had separated the disciples from the Jewish synagogue, so that, to reckon the whole time which Paul spent at Ephesus, we must at least add to these two years the three months during which he preached in the synagogue. In his farewell address to the Ephesian elders, however, he says that by the space of three years he ceased not to warn every one. Acts 20. 31.—*Glaag.* During this time Paul wrote First Corinthians. 1 Cor. 16. 8, 9. It is probable also that at this time the Church at Colosse was formed, not directly by Paul, but by one of his disciples named Epaphras. Col. 1. 7.—*L. Abbott.* **All they which dwelt in Asia**—By Asia is meant proconsular Asia, of which Ephesus was the capital, comprising the provinces of Lydia, Caria, and Mysia, on the Egean Sea. The expression is hyperbolic, denoting the extensive diffusion of the Gospel;



yet it may have been almost literally true. It is not asserted that all the inhabitants of Asia heard Paul preach, but only that they heard the word of the Lord. **Heard the word**—Ephesus, probably, came to be the center of Paul's activity, from which journeys were made to neighboring cities; and hence we may legitimately think of the other six Churches of Rev. 2 and 3 as owing their origin to him.—*Pumpton.* **All had the opportunity**, and probably some of every considerable town availed themselves of it.—*Alford.*

Men are accountable to God for every opportunity which has been offered to them to hear the

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11 And <sup>6</sup> God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul:

12 So <sup>7</sup> that from his body were brought unto the sick handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out of them.

13 Then <sup>8</sup> certain of the vagabond Jews, exorcists, <sup>9</sup> took upon them to call over them which had evil spirits the

<sup>6</sup> Mark 16. 20.—<sup>7</sup> 2 Kings 4. 29.—<sup>8</sup> Matt. 12. 27.—<sup>9</sup> Mark 9. 38; Luke 9. 49.

Gospel, even if they have not actually heard it.—*Starke.*

11. **Special miracles**—Paul in Ephesus was in the very heart of superstition: he was like Moses in Egypt, surrounded by magicians and exorcists; and, therefore, to manifest beyond dispute his superior power, God granted that extraordinary miracles should be wrought by him—miracles more striking than those which he was accustomed to perform: and the effect of these miracles was not to foster superstition, but to root it out, to confound the exorcists of Ephesus, and to destroy their magical works.—*Gloag.*

12. **From his body**—Luke's own habit of mind as a physician would lead him to dwell on the various phenomena presented by the supernatural gift of healing.—*Plumptre.* **Were brought unto the sick**—The thought is both natural and obvious that in these working garments, in this pouring out of his sweat, the people saw and revered the plenitude of infinite love and power which had shone forth in the Apostle Paul.—*Baumgarten.* All miraculous working is an exertion of the direct power of the All-Powerful; a suspension *by him* of his ordinary laws; and whether he will use *any* instrument in doing this, or *what* instrument, must depend altogether on his own purpose in the miracle—the effect to be produced on the recipients, beholders, or hearers. Without his special selection and enabling, *all instruments were vain*; with these, *all are capable.*—*Alford.* **Handkerchiefs**—Handkerchiefs which, on account of the heat and the dust, are constantly in the hands of the Orientals. It is the same word which occurs in Luke 19. 20; John 11. 44; 20. 7, and is there translated “napkin.” **Aprons**—Aprons, or waist-bands; probably the aprons employed by workmen when engaged at work. They may have been the clothes worn by Paul when engaged in his occupation as a tent-maker.—*Gloag.* **Diseases . . . evil spirits**—*Diseases, possession by evil spirits,* are here plainly distinguished from each

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wrought special <sup>1</sup>miracles by the

12 hands of Paul: insomuch that unto the sick were carried away from his body handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them, 13 and the evil spirits went out. But certain also of the strolling Jews, exorcists, took upon them to name over them which had the evil spirits

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *powers.*

other.—*Alford.* These miracles were exceptional, and not numerous; this is implied by the phrase “special miracles,” and by the consideration that Paul could hardly have possessed an unlimited supply of handkerchiefs and aprons.—*L. Abbott.*

To argue by analogy from such a case—to suppose that because our Lord was able, and Peter and Paul, and in Old Testament times, Elisha, were enabled, to exert this peculiar power, therefore the same will be possessed by the body or relics of every real or supposed saint, is the height of folly and fanaticism.—*Alford.*

13. **Certain of the vagabond Jews** [Rev. Ver., *strolling Jews.*]—They were traveling claimants to the power of casting out demons and restoring the diseased. Similarly, nearly to our own times, traveling gypsies and other fortune-tellers have perpetuated old heathen superstitions even through the Christian ages.—*Whedon.* **Exorcists**—Men who, by the authority of the name of some powerful being, solemnly assumed to require the demon to depart so effectively as to be obeyed. For some occult reason Solomon, the king of Israel, was supposed to possess that mighty power over demons that, used in adjuration, would compel or frighten them to depart.—*Whedon.* The men belonged to a lower section of the class of which we have already seen representatives in Simon of Samaria, or Elymas of Cyprus.—*Plumptre.* **Them which had evil spirits**—The evil spirits are represented acting as distinct personalities, and in this chapter possession is distinguished from natural disease. Ver. 12. That there was a real possession, that evil spirits exerted a direct influence over the bodies and souls of men, is undoubtedly the natural meaning of those passages of Scripture where demoniacs are mentioned. No doubt madness seems to have been an inseparable accompaniment of possession; the man was deprived of his own free will, and ruled by the evil spirit. For all that we know such possessions may occur in our days: if we had the

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name of the Lord Je'sus, saying, We adjure you by Je'sus whom Paul preacheth.

14 And there were seven sons of one Sce'va, a Jew, and chief of the priests, which did so.

15 And the evil spirit answered and said, Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are ye?

<sup>10</sup> Matt. 8. 29; Mark 1. 24; 5. 7; Luke 4. 34; chap. 16. 17; Jas. 2. 19.

power of discerning spirits it might be discovered that such cases were not unknown, and, therefore, that they occurred only in the days of our Saviour and his apostles is a statement which cannot be proved. In an age of such extreme sensuality it is not improbable that demoniacal possession was more frequent; but we are not at all sure that it has entirely ceased in our days: at least cases occur which bear a close resemblance to the descriptions of demoniacal possession given in the New Testament. We live in a spiritual world; there are powers and agencies around us and within us; and in the case of mental disease especially it is often impossible to say whether the mere derangement of the physical organs, or some spiritual disorder, is the cause of the disease.—*Gloag*. **The name of the Lord Jesus**—To them the name of the *Lord Jesus*, which was so often in Paul's lips, was just another formula mightier than the name of the Most High God, or that of the archangels Raphael or Michael, which were used by others.—*Plumptre*. **Jesus whom Paul preacheth**—As Jesus was a common name among the Jews, they add "whom Paul preaches" as a description of his person.—*Gloag*.

Mysterious symbols, called Ephesian letters, were employed to charm away evil spirits, either by being pronounced by the charmer, or written upon parchment, or engraved upon stone, and so employed as an amulet. The study of these symbols was an elaborate science, and books both numerous and costly were compiled by its professors. These magical arts were practiced by not a few of the Jews; the very severity with which the Old Testament forbids such practices (Exod. 22. 18; Lev. 20. 27; Deut. 18. 10, 11; 1 Sam. 23. 3, 9) indicates a national tendency toward them. The Talmud and Josephus give evidence of a continuance of these practices at a later period, as do references in Paul's epistles. Gal. 5. 20; 2 Tim. 3. 13. A knowledge of magic was a requisite qualification of a member of the Sanhedrin, that he might be able to try those who were accused of employing it; and the art was believed among

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the name of the Lord Je'sus, saying, I adjure you by Je'sus whom Paul

14 preacheth. And there were seven sons of one Sce'va, a Jew, a chief  
15 spirit, which did this. And the evil spirit answered and said unto them, Je'sus I know, and Paul I know; 16 but who are ye? And the man in

<sup>20</sup>Or, *recognise*.

the Jews to have been derived from King Solomon. The instruments employed in its practice were chiefly fumigations, incantations, use of certain herbs, and the employment of charms, written or spoken.—*L. Abbott*.

14. Seven sons of one Sceva . . . did so—The seven exorcists, relying partly, we may believe, in the mystical virtue of their number, stand face to face with a demoniac, frenzied and strong, like the Gadarene of Matt. 8. 28; Mark 5. 3, 4.—*E. H. Plumptre*. **Chief of the priests**—This indefinite title might imply either (1) That he had held the office of high-priest at Jerusalem, which, in this case, is unlikely. (2) That he was the head of one of the twenty-four priestly courses; also unlikely. (3) That he may have been simply a person of priestly rank and of some influence. So Josephus uses the term. (4) Some have thought that he was a priest, and called "chief," because ruler of the synagogue at Ephesus. (5) Dr. Whedon thinks that he was an apostate Jew, acting as priest of the Ephesian Diana. (6) Dr. Plumptre thinks that the title was a part of the imposture. "He called himself a chief priest, and as such Luke described him." We incline to the view No. 4.

15. And the evil spirit—The narrative, from describing the nature of the attempt, passes to a single case in which it was tried, and in which (see below) two only of the brothers were apparently concerned.—*Afford*. **Answered and said**—Speaking from within the man, and using his organs.—*D. D. Whedon*. **Jesus I know**—Better, *Jesus I acknowledge*. The two verbs are different in the Greek, the one implying recognition of authority, the latter, as colloquially used, though originally it had a stronger meaning, a more familiar acquaintance.—*E. H. Plumptre*. **Paul I know**—The evil spirit was compelled to bear an unwilling testimony to Jesus and his servant Paul.—*Gloag*. **Who are ye**—The question is not one of ignorance, but of censure, because they arrogated to themselves what belonged not to them; and of contempt, because

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16 And the man in whom the evil spirit was leaped on them, and overcame them, and prevailed against them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded.

17 And this was known to all the Jews and Greeks also dwelling at Eph'e-sus; and fear<sup>11</sup> fell on them all, and the name of the Lord Je'sus was magnified.

18 And many that believed came, and<sup>12</sup> confessed, and showed their deeds.

19 Many of them also which<sup>13</sup> used curious arts brought their books together, and burned them before all men: and they counted the price of them, and found it fifty thousand *pieces* of silver.

<sup>11</sup> Luke 1. 65; 7. 16, chap. 2. 43; 5. 5, 11.—<sup>12</sup> Jer 3. 13; Matt. 3. 6.—<sup>13</sup> Isa. 30. 22.

they considered not their own and their opponents' strength, but with rashness dared to contend with one more powerful, to whom it was mere play to overcome them.—*Raphelius*.

16. **The man in whom the evil spirit was**—The demoniacal possession brought with it, as in the case of the Gadarene, the preternatural strength of frenzy, and the impostors (men of that class being commonly more or less cowards) fled in dismay before the violent paroxysms of the man's passionate rage.—*E. H. Plumptre*. **Overcame them** [Rev. Ver., *Mastered both of them*.]—Two of the seven brethren, more forward and conspicuous than the rest, underwent the discomfiture.—*Jacobson*. **Fled out . . . naked**—The first word does not necessarily imply more than that the outer garment, or cloak, was torn off from them, and that they were left with nothing but the short tunic.—*E. H. Plumptre*.

17. **Fear fell on them all**—The failure of the sons of Seeva in their attempt to cast out devils showed that the miracles performed by Paul in the name of the Lord Jesus were real, and were, therefore, undoubted evidences of the truth of Christianity.—*Gloag*. **Name of . . . Jesus was magnified**—As superior to every other name, even that of Diana, and as alone divine, and obeyed by the most terrible power of hell.—*Whedon*. Men thought more of it than they had done before, because they saw the punishment that fell on those who had profaned it.—*Plumptre*.

18. **And many**—The *many* of verse 18 are the dupes, those who had consulted the wizards; the *many* of verse 19 are the wizards themselves.—*L. Abbott*. **That believed**—Many who, al-

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whom the evil spirit was leaped on them, and mastered both of them, and prevailed against them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded. And this became known to all, both Jews and Greeks, that dwelt at Eph'e-sus; and fear fell upon them all, and the name of the Lord Je'sus was magnified.

17 Many also of them that had believed came, confessing, and declaring their deeds. And not a few of them that practiced<sup>3</sup> curious arts brought their books together, and burned them in the sight of all: and they counted the price of them, and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver. So might-

<sup>3</sup> Or, *magical*.

though professed disciples, were not entirely delivered from their former superstitions, but secretly practiced magical arts, now come forward and confess and renounce them.—*Gloag*. **And confessed**—Not their sins in general, but their participation in magical arts.

19. **Many of them** [Rev. Ver., *Not a few*.]—In the original, a word of narrower scope than that in the preceding verse. *Many* confessed, *several* burned their books.—*Jacobson*. **Curious**—So all our English Versions, following the Vulgate; arts which pried into matters beyond the limits of human knowledge. **Brought their books**—These books consisted of magical *formulæ* or *receipt books*, or written *amulets*. These last were celebrated by the name of *Ephesian scrolls*. They were copies of the mystic words engraved on the images of the Ephesian Artemis, (Diana).—*Alford*. **Burned them**—This was very much more effectual than there than it can ever have been since the invention of printing. By actually destroying the books, they not only acknowledged the sinfulness of the practices taught therein, but also cut off at once and absolutely the possibility of relapse on their own part, or of leaving a temptation or stumbling-block in the way of others.—*W. Jacobson*. Confession is cheap, but reformation is often costly. A false penitence would have sold these books, and kept both the money and the credit for piety.—*Whedon*. **Fifty thousand pieces of silver**—The Roman *denarius* is, in all probability, the coin here alluded to, the value of which was about ninepence, so that the entire sum would amount to £1,875, [nearly \$10,000.] This vast sum is to



## Authorized Version.

20 So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed.

21 After these things were ended, Paul purposed in the spirit, when he had passed through Mac-e-do'ni-a and A-cha'ia, to go to Je-ru'sa-lem, saying,

<sup>18</sup> Col. 1. 6.—<sup>19</sup> Rom. 15. 25; Gal. 2. 1. — <sup>20</sup> Chap. 20. 22.

be accounted for by considering the rarity of books in those days, and their consequent expensiveness; probably also magical works brought a fictitious price.—*Gloag.*

Eustathius informs us that Croesus, when on his funeral pile, repeated the Ephesian letters; and he mentions that, in the Olympian Games, an Ephesian wrestler struggled successfully against his opponent from Miletus because he had around his ankle Ephesian letters, but that, being deprived of them, he was thrice overthrown.—*Gloag.*

The student of the history of Florence cannot help recalling the analogous scene in that city, when men and women, artists and musicians, brought the things in which they most delighted—pictures, ornaments, costly dresses—and burnt them in the Piazza of St. Mark at the bidding of Savonarola.—*Plumptre.*

If Judas had been by, he would have said, "Sell them, and give the money to the poor;" or, "Buy Bibles and good books with it." But, then, who could tell into whose hands these dangerous books might fall, and what mischief might be done by them? It was, therefore, the safest course to commit them all to the flames. Those that are recovered from sin themselves will do all they can to keep others from falling into it, and are much more afraid of laying an occasion of sin in the way of others.—*M. Henry.*

This burning is very different from, and gives no warrant for, the burning of heretical books by the Roman Catholic Church; in the one case, the books are burned voluntarily by the owners, in the other, in spite of the owners.—*L. Abbott.*

20. So mightily grew the word—Grew in the extent of its influence, through the instrumentality of Paul's preaching, so that both Jews and Gentiles, people of all grades in society, in Ephesus and throughout all proconsular Asia, became followers of the Lord. And prevailed—While there was great extension of the faith, its influence on the hearts and lives of the converts became stronger.—*Jacobson.* In this complete renunciation of the old evil past we may probably see the secret of the capacity for a higher

## Revised Version.

ily grew the word of the Lord and prevailed.

21 Now after these things were ended, Paul purposed in the spirit, when he had passed through Mac-e-do'ni-a and A-cha'ia, to go to Je-ru'sa-lem,

knowledge which Paul recognizes as belonging to Ephesus more than to most other Churches.—*Plumptre.*

The shock that buried Lisbon in 1755 never ceased to vibrate till it reached the wilds of Scotland and the vineyards of Madeira. It was felt among the islands of the Grecian Archipelago, and it changed the level of the solitary lakes that sleep beneath the shadow of the North Alps. Even so the shock that Satan's kingdom sustained when Christianity was established will not cease to vibrate till it moves the whole world.—*Hardwicke.*

21. Paul purposed in the spirit—By the phrase *purposed in spirit* we must doubtless understand neither a direct intimation of the Spirit, such as he had received during his first residence in this region, (chap. 16. 7,) nor yet an ordinary act of human deliberation and decision, but rather an act of the inner life, in which the energy of the divine Spirit and of the spirit of Paul co-operated together in one common purpose.—*Bromgarten.* Through Macedonia and Achaia—Provinces on the west of the Egean Sea, where Paul had already labored. Two reasons are to be assigned for Paul's desire to visit Macedonia and Achaia; first, as we learn from his epistles, he desired to promote the collection for the poor saints at Jerusalem; and, secondly, he had received intelligence of the disorders which prevailed in the Church of Corinth, and he was anxious to rectify them.—*Gloag.* To go to Jerusalem—The later Church at Jerusalem, under the terrible pressure of the hostile temple and haughty priesthood, was always half Judaized and quite pauperized. Toward the apostle of the Gentiles their face was repulsive. Toward them, in return, Paul looked with deep pity for their narrowness, yet with reverence for their position as the mother Church, and with a strong desire at once to relieve their necessities and win their hearts both to himself and Christ, the divine Incarnate. With these views he organized a system of extensive money contributions from all his Gentile Churches, with which in hand he

## Authorized Version.

After I have been there, <sup>17</sup> I must also see Rome.

<sup>22</sup> So he sent into Mac-e-do'ni-a two of them <sup>18</sup> that ministered unto him, Tim'o-the-us and <sup>19</sup> E-ras'tus; but he himself stayed in A'si-a for a season.

<sup>17</sup> Chap. 23, 11; Rom. 15, 24.—<sup>18</sup> Chap. 13, 5.—<sup>19</sup> Rom. 16, 23; <sup>2</sup> Tim. 4, 20.

purposed, attended by the chosen delegates of the Churches, to revisit the Jerusalem Church.—*Whedon*. **Must also see Rome**—As he was sent to the Gentiles he saw that the great metropolis of the Gentile world was the legitimate center of his apostolic working. Or perhaps he speaks under some divine intimation that *ultimately* he should be brought to Rome.—*Alford*. This purpose was executed, but in a manner very different from that anticipated by the apostle; he went to Jerusalem, was there arrested, and sent as a prisoner to Rome.—*L. Abbott*.

The sphere of the Christian Church is rapidly enlarging, and the ideas of the great missionary are enlarging along with it. Ephesus is now a station in the middle of his field.

He speaks of this unintermitted course of arduous and dangerous service as if he was only going to make some friendly visit, or join in a party of innocent pleasure.—*J. Hovey*.

**22. He sent into Macedonia**—Perhaps to gather up the contributions of the Churches, and avoid delay at his own coming. See 1 Cor. 16. 1-5; 2 Cor. 9. 5. **Two of them**—This would indicate that a company of Christian workers had gathered around Paul as his helpers in the Gospel. Such we find was the case from Acts 20. 4. There was a peculiar attractiveness about the apostle drawing men to him, winning their hearts by an irresistible attraction. **Ministered unto him**—Aided in Christian work, and perhaps gave him the personal attention needed by one in delicate and uncertain health. **Timotheus**—Timothy. See notes on 1st Quar., Lesson V, verses 1-3. Light is thrown on the mission of Timothy by 1 Cor. 4. 17. He was sent on in advance to warn and exhort, and to save the apostle from the necessity of using severity when he himself arrived. Paul exhorts the Corinthians (1 Cor. 16. 10) to receive him with respect, so that he might not feel that his youth detracted from his authority. He was to return to Paul, and was accordingly with him when he wrote the Second Epistle to the Corinthians. 2 Cor. 1. 1.—*Plumptre*. **Eras-tus**—It is uncertain whether this was the same

## Revised Version.

saying, After I have been there, I <sup>22</sup> must also see Rome. And having sent into Mac-e-do'ni-a two of them that ministered unto him, Tim'o-thy and E-ras'tus, he himself stayed in A'si-a for awhile.

person as the Erastus who is called "the chamberlain [or treasurer] of the city," that is, Corinth, in Rom. 16. 23, and is named (2 Tim. 4. 20) long afterward. It seems unlikely that a responsible official in a great city like Corinth should be a hundred miles away in Ephesus "ministering" to a preacher of the Gospel. Yet Dr. Whedon and others regard them as the same. It may be that Erastus was not appointed to office until after this journey, which perhaps led to his settlement at Corinth. **For a season**—Perhaps till Pentecost. This delay may have been occasioned by the great door being opened for him at Troas. 2 Cor. 2. 12.—*Jacobson*.

## Authorities to be Consulted.

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## Practical Thoughts.

## THE POWER OF THE GOSPEL.

1. The Gospel has power to give boldness in testimony by imparting clearness of view, strength of conviction, and courage in behalf of the Gospel. Ver. 8.

2. The Gospel has power to draw lines of distinction among men, separating the precious from the vile, and the believer from the unbeliever. Ver. 9.

3. The Gospel has power to make progress, to attract attention, and to make itself known in the world. Ver. 10.

4. The Gospel has miraculous, supernatural power to heal and to save through instrumentalities which are powerless without God's presence. Ver. 12.

5. The Gospel has power, through its divine element, to overthrow all evil spiritual influences, and to show Christ supreme in the realm of spirits. Vers. 13-17.

6. The Gospel has power to discern the true from the false, and to reveal those who pretend to assume its garb and to bear its appearance. Vers. 14-17.

7. The Gospel has power to inspire self-denial, and the surrender of all evil at any cost. Ver. 19.

### Sermon Outline.

BY REV. C. R. BARNES, M.A.

How can these incidents occurring at Ephesus be made profitable to the spiritual life of the day? We need to remember that the nature and principles of good and evil are ever the same, and that it is only the operation that changes with time. We have here brought together in strong contrast the greed of selfishness and the benevolence of love.

#### I. The Greed of Selfishness.

This is shown in its desire to profit by the power of Jesus. For gold, selfishness would use divine power given for the welfare of his suffering children. It would take gifts from the hand of love and turn them into merchandise. It mingled the jingling of coin with the sacred sound of harp and viol and trumpet. It crowded both priest and Levite while at their service, and placed higher estimate upon the counter than upon the altar.

The sons of Sceva would parley about price before they endeavored to free a brother from the powers of darkness. And not only these, but others of selfish make, who have never walked with love, serve at the altar of greed while their brothers die for bread. Miracles of healing, whether handkerchief or God's holy word, are a waste only as they may secure the hundred pence, they, meanwhile, carrying the bag.

Greed knows no sacrifice. It never gives. It never lifts up its voice to the poor and needy and cries "Come, buy, without money and without price." It is always a marketman, never the benefactor. It makes corners on grain, and would, if possible, be a monopolist of the love and mercy of God.

But sin in any form is its own destroyer. When and wherever grown, it is a tree whose fruit is always death. Greed is the mill-horse of selfishness, who always travels in ever-diminishing circles until it falls in death and endless poverty. Even demons refuse to be subject to greed, and, in indignation, palsy the hand that would lead them to the marketplace.

One other lesson. Those who believed confessed their errors and burned their books of sorcery.

Repentance has its fruit, if sincere. That fruit is sacrifice. At Ephesus its price was fifty thousand pieces of silver. Nor will genuine repentance stop here. All is not too much for it to offer God when it comes to its altar. Confession is cheap, but reformation is costly. And he who higgles over the demands of Penitence cannot retain her as his guest. With empty hands she bows at the altar, while Faith prays for the fullness of divine mercy.

#### II. The Benevolence of Love.

Paul appears as the preacher and representative of Divine love, and as such let us study him in his work.

1. *Fostering the weak.* Paul finds the disciples at Ephesus groping in the early twilight of truth. Accepting the declaration of John as to the coming of God's kingdom; accepting the necessity of a moral preparation for that kingdom; recognizing their own sinfulness, they turned to God in penitence, and were baptized unto repentance. But they were in ignorance of the Holy Spirit as the efficient agency in that spiritual preparation of mind and heart, the result of which is the new birth. When Paul appears among them he kindly inquires as to their condition, and then leads them gently to the day. There are no chiding words, no impatient gesture, no depreciatory remarks, born of spiritual or intellectual pride, but the kindly, patient leadings of love. So it is ever with God. He never breaks the bruised reed, but binds up the wounded stem, protects it from the tearing wind and beating storm, while he imparts life and strength.

2. *The unexacting nature of love.* Paul was "all things to all men"—to the babe a gentle nurse; to the strong man a brother in fact, argument, and inference; to the Jew a Jew; to the Gentile foregoing circumcision. Every thing but right must yield to love. So at first he enters the synagogue, but when hard-faced ritualism croaked instead of chanting its psalms, Paul has no dispute—he does not strive nor denounce—but, quietly withdrawing, blows the silver trumpet in the halls of Tyrannus. Love must serve. If refused a place at the temple service she will rear her humble altar beside the hedge or in the unfrequented by-way. She is not exacting as to the place, the hour, the circumstances of her service, for work and sacrifice are her life.

3. *Liberality.* When love sees distress it is her nature to relieve. Benevolence is never a commercial article. Paul, working with his own hands, never hopes to relieve his toil by fixing a price upon the miracles of healing. God's children, those for whom Christ died, are suffering. If they are healed by God's minister, that healing must be as free as air. God never sent man a bill for air or sunlight, nor fixed a price upon redemption. Love gives, but never sells.

A. D. 57.]

LESSON III.

[April 20.

PAUL'S PREACHING.—1 Cor. 1. 17-31.

**GOLDEN TEXT.**—We preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness.—1 Cor. 1. 23.

TIME.—This epistle was written in the spring of A. D. 57.

PLACE.—Written from Ephesus to the Church at Corinth in Greece.

CONNECTING LINKS.—Topics in the epistle: (1) Rebuke to the spirit of division. Chaps. 1-4. (2) Concerning marriage and moral questions. Chaps. 5-7. (3) The idol-sacrifices. Chap. 8. (4) Paul's apostolic authority. Chap. 9. (5) The Lord's Supper. Chap. 10. (6) Proper conduct at public services. Chap. 11. (7) Spiritual gifts. Chaps. 12-14. (8) The resurrection. Chap. 15. (9) Greetings and farewell. Chap. 16.

INTRODUCTION. *The First Epistle to the Corinthians.*—It was written at Ephesus early in the same year in which Paul left Ephesus for Macedonia. 1 Cor. 16. 8. Its immediate occasion seems to have been the arrival at Ephesus of the family, or some of the family, of a Christian matron of Corinth named Chloe. These had brought unfavorable intelligence from the Corinthian Church. The apostle names only the report of divisions and parties; but we can hardly be wrong in believing that the news of the very serious matter treated in chap. 5 was brought by the same persons. These tidings, together with the questions on which the apostolic counsels were requested, induced Paul to write this, one of the longest and most important of his pastoral letters, and the pattern, above all others, of earnest and weighty admonition and declaration springing out of circumstances. For of such a character, above all others, is this epistle—not a treatise on any point, or any system of Christian doctrine, as some others by this same apostle, but a series of fragments, or episodes, each of them *occasional*, arising out of something referred to him, or heard of by him, but not one of them devoid of interest for those who come after in all the long ages of the Church.—*Alford.*

## Authorized Version.

17 For <sup>1</sup>Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the Gospel: not with wisdom of <sup>a</sup>words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect.

<sup>1</sup> Acts 26. 17.—<sup>a</sup> Or, speech.

**17. Sent**—The word whence *apostle* is derived; *Christ apostled me not to baptize.* Baptizing was not named in his apostolic commission. Acts 9. 15; 22. 15; 26. 16-18; Gal. 1. 16. Yet baptism was included in the commission of the twelve, (Matt. 28. 19,) to be done, doubtless, either by themselves or by subordinates appointed.—*Whedon.* **Not to baptize**—It is evident that this is said in no *derogation* of baptism, for he did on occasion baptize, and it would be impossible that he should speak lightly of the ordinance to which he appeals (Rom. 6. 3) as the seal of our union with Christ.—*Alford.* The apostles being endued with the highest degree of inspiration and miraculous powers, had the office of preaching committed to them rather than that of baptizing, because they were best qualified for converting the world, and had not time to give the converted, either before or after their baptism, such particular instruction as their former ignorance rendered necessary. These offices, therefore, were committed to the inferior ministers of the word.—*Macknight.* **Not with** [Rev. Ver., *in*] **wisdom of words**—The Greek word

## Revised Version.

17 For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not in wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made void.

here rendered *wisdom*, *sophia*, is the last half of the word *philosophia*, *philosophy*, and means throughout this chapter precisely the same thing, except that the former signified *wisdom*, and the latter, signifying the *love of wisdom*, was the more modest profession for a sage to make. Both terms mean that system of thought originated by the intellect of deep thinkers which assumes to decide on the origin of all things, the existence of God, and the nature and destiny of man.—*Whedon.* *Philosophical reasoning* set off with *oratorical language* and secular learning, which the Corinthians set so undue a value upon (verse 5; chap. 2. 1, 4) in Apollos, and the want of which in Paul they were dissatisfied with. 2 Cor. 10. 10.—*D. Brown.* **Lest the cross of Christ**—By "the cross of Christ" we understand that death of Christ upon the cross by which we are redeemed and reconciled to God. This is the center and kernel of all Gospel preaching, by the power of which sinners are delivered from the tyranny of sin, and restored to a new and divine life.—*Kling.* **Made of none effect** [Rev. Ver., *be made void.*]—Barren

## Authorized Version.

18 For the preaching of the cross is to them <sup>3</sup> that perish <sup>2</sup> foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is <sup>4</sup> the power of God.

19 For it is written, <sup>5</sup> I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent.

<sup>2</sup> 2 Cor. 2, 15.—<sup>3</sup> Acts 17, 18.—<sup>4</sup> Rom. 1, 16.—<sup>5</sup> Isa. 29, 14.

of results. Had the Gospel been set forth with clever reasoning its results might have been attributed to the skill of the preacher. If so the superhuman power, which through the death of Christ operates on man, would have been overlooked. And, if so, it would have been scorned of results: for the blood of Christ saves in proportion as its saving power is recognized.—*Beet.* To have adorned the Gospel with the paint of the Grecian rhetoric would have obscured its wisdom and simplicity, just as the gilding of a diamond would destroy its brilliancy.—*Macknight.*

18. **The preaching of the cross**—The "preaching of the cross" must mean: (1) That Christ died as an atoning sacrifice for the sins of men, and that it was this which gave its peculiarity to his sufferings on the cross. (2) That men can be reconciled to God, pardoned, and saved only by the merits and influence of this atoning sacrifice.—*Burns.* **To them that perish** [Rev. Ver., *that are perishing.*]—It is not the final state that is referred to; but "them that are in the way of perishing."—*D. Brown.* The destruction of those who reject Christ has already begun, and daily goes on. For, in them, spiritual forces are already at work which, unless arrested by God, will inevitably bring them to eternal death. Since they are now beyond human help they are said, in Matt. 10, 6; Eph. 2, 1; Rom. 7, 9, to be "lost," and "dead." But since they are still within reach of Christ's salvation, but daily going farther from it, Paul prefers to speak of them here, not as "lost," but as *losing themselves, or perishing.*—*Beet.* **Foolishness**—Since the Gospel is a *power of God* it must needs appear *foolishness* to those who do not experience its power. For the power of God is beyond our comprehension, and all means beyond our comprehension seem to us unfit to attain any good results; for we cannot see the connection between the means and end. Consequently superior wisdom has often, at first sight, the appearance of folly.—*Beet.* Just as a telegraph would appear to be an impossible method

## Revised Version.

18 For the word of the cross is to them that are perishing foolishness; but unto us which are being saved it is the power of God. For it is written,

I will destroy the wisdom of the wise,  
And the prudence of the prudent  
will I reject.

of communication to one who has never seen it and knows nothing of its principle or working. **Unto us which are saved** [Rev. Ver., *are being saved.*]—Those who are *being saved* are those in the way of salvation, who by faith have laid hold on Christ, and are by him in the course of *being saved.*—*Mford.* Experiencing day by day a present deliverance from spiritual evil, and thus daily approaching final salvation.—*Beet.* **The power of God**—The death of Christ owes its results, not to any thing which commends itself to human wisdom as suitable to attain its end, but purely to God's power operating upon men through Christ's death.—*Beet.* Faith gives insight into God's plan of salvation, and thus the believer sees divine power in what seems foolishness to minds untainted by the Spirit.

The sects of philosophers, though numerous and exceedingly various, were all agreed in proudly trusting in themselves that they were wise, and despising others. Their published opinions, their private speculations, their personal immorality, made them irreconcilable adversaries of Christianity. The apostles, therefore, in attempting to propagate the Gospel among the Gentiles, were opposed by all the wit and learning and sophistry, all the pride and jealousy and malice, of every sect of philosophers.—*Bishop McIlvaine.*

19. **For it is written**—Almost word for word, (LXX,) (Isa. 29, 14,) which refers, probably, to the invasion of Sennacherib. Chap. 36, 1. The statesmen of Judah had sought to protect their country by an alliance with Egypt. And, but for the covenant of God, which made it an act of rebellion against him, such alliance would have been their best defense, and, therefore, a mark of political *wisdom.* But God made this *wisdom* practically worthless, and in this sense *destroyed* it, by bringing against Judah the armies of Sennacherib, and thus placing the nation in a position in which all political wisdom was powerless to save. And, as Paul's readers knew, by his own power God wrought salvation in a way most unlikely.—*Beet.* **Bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent** [Rev. Ver., *The*

## Authorized Version.

20 Where <sup>6</sup> *is* the wise? where *is* the scribe? where *is* the disputer of this world? hath <sup>7</sup> not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?

21 For <sup>8</sup> after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believed.

22 For the <sup>9</sup> Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom:

<sup>6</sup> Isa. 33. 18.—<sup>7</sup> Isa. 44. 25.—<sup>8</sup> Luke 10. 21.—<sup>9</sup> Luke 11. 16.

*prudence of the prudent will I reject.*]—The application of this to the subject in hand is this: The Lord has been wont to punish the arrogance of those who, depending on their own judgment, think to be leaders to themselves and others; and if this happened among a people whose wisdom the other nations had occasion to admire, what will become of others!—*Calvin.*

20. **Where is the wise**—Without designing to quote these words as having an original reference to the subject under consideration, Paul uses them as any man does language where he finds words with which he or his readers are familiar, that will convey his meaning. A man familiar with the Bible will, naturally, often make use of Scripture expressions in conveying his ideas.—*Barnes.* **Scribe**—Literally, “man of letters,” “Scripture man,” a class of Jews devoted to the study of the Scriptures.—*Beet.* As the apostle advances, his mind recognizes that the Jewish parallels to the *sophoi* and *philosophs* of the heathen world, namely, the scribes, must be included in the same humiliation. He deals mainly with Greek philosophers, because Corinth is a Greek city.—*Whedon.* **The disputer**—Refers, probably, to Greek men of learning, among whom discussion had a large place. **Of this world**—*This age*, (see Rom. 12. 2.) the complex realm of things around us, except so far as it submits to Christ, looked upon as existing in time, and for a time. The unsaved are “sons of this age,” (Luke 18. 8; 20. 34.) for all they have and are belong to this present life. Contrast “the coming age.” Luke 16. 30; Eph. 2. 7; Heb. 6. 5.—*Beet.* **Hath not God made foolish**—Shown by the plan of salvation, through the Gospel, the utter folly of all earthly attempts at making men fit for heaven. **The wisdom of the world**—The best knowledge possessed by those who belong to the world around, looked upon as a practical guide of life.—*Beet.*

21. **After that** [Rev. Ver., *seeing that*] in the wisdom of God—“*Amid the wisdom of God,*”

## Revised Version.

20 Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this <sup>1</sup> world? hath not God made foolish <sup>2</sup> the wisdom of the world? For seeing that in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom knew not God, it was God's good pleasure through the foolishness of the <sup>3</sup> preaching to <sup>4</sup> save them that believe. Seeing that Jews ask for signs, and Greeks seek

<sup>1</sup> Or, *age*.—<sup>2</sup> Gr. *thing preached*.

surrounded by the works of creation, all which, from the little flowers under our feet to the great orbs of heaven, are embodiments and witnesses of the wisdom of God.—*Beet.* **The world by wisdom**—The apostle ironically styles things as the world styles them. By a similar irony the apostle asserts that since *wisdom* failed to know God, God accomplished the result by a *foolishness*.—*Whedon.* **Knew not God**—They knew him confusedly, but not distinctly; they knew in general that a God there was, but knew not particularly who the true God was; they knew him notionally, but not practically; their knowledge had no influence upon their hearts or lives; they knew him as essentially considered in himself, but knew him not relatively, as considered in Christ; they knew not Immanuel, God with us, and becoming a Mediator for us; him they did not know.—*Burkitt.* Notice the double failure of human wisdom. It was unable to read God's name as written in nature, and pronounced that to be foolishness which he chose as the instrument of salvation.—*Beet.* **It pleased God** [Rev. Ver., *It was God's good pleasure.*]—It indicates here, not so much the freedom or pure favor, from which the resolve proceeded, as the suitability of his proceeding to the end contemplated, or to the circumstances of the case.—*Kling.* **By the foolishness of preaching**—The foolishness of preaching means, the preaching of foolishness, that is, the cross.—*Hodge.* Just so Samson's weapon (Judg. 15) proclaimed, by its ludicrous insufficiency, the infinite power of the Spirit of God.—*Beet.* **To save**—God saves men through the blood of Christ, a plan which unregenerate wisdom never fails to ridicule as folly. **Believe**—By unbelief man lost God; by faith he recovers God.—*Whedon.*

22. **The Jews require a sign** [Rev. Ver., *Seeing that Jews ask for signs.*]—See Matt. 12. 38; 16. 1; Luke 11; John 2. 18; 6. 30. The sign required was not a mere miracle, but some token from heaven, substantiating the word preached.

## Authorized Version.

23 But we preach Christ crucified, unto the <sup>10</sup> Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness;

24 But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ <sup>11</sup> the power of God, and the <sup>12</sup> wisdom of God.

25 Because <sup>13</sup> the foolishness of God

<sup>10</sup> 1st. 8. 14; Matt. 11. 6. — <sup>11</sup> Rom. 1. 4. — <sup>12</sup> Col. 2. 3. — <sup>13</sup> 1 Cor. 1. 7.

— *Alford*. Accustomed, under their dispensation, to miracles, the Jews prescribed signs. Christ, indeed, worked miracles—was himself a miracle; but they demanded that he should come in Messianic glory, renew the earth, and give to them its supremacy. That is, they required at his first coming the manifestations of his second coming. But as, instead of the throne he received the cross, this became to them a stumbling-block.—

*Whedon*. **Greeks seek after wisdom**—They demanded, as proof that Christ was worthy to be their teacher, that he should expound the mysteries of being, and reveal the great principles underlying the phenomena around.—*Beet*. As to the Jew *miracle* was the route to truth and God, so to the Greek philosophy, demonstration, starting from intuition and winding through logic, was the sole guide and test.—*Whedon*.

23. **We preach Christ crucified**—The central thought of the apostle's preaching was the cross of Christ. He did not dwell upon Jesus as an example in character, or Jesus as a teacher of truth, but he proclaimed as the keystone of the arch of doctrine the atonement, or man reconciled with God through the death of Jesus Christ on the cross. And that which Paul made the center of his teaching we should make the center of ours. **Unto the Jews a stumbling-block**—The Jews looked for a Christ, for the word Christ is *Messiah* in Hebrew, and the coming of the Messiah was the consolation of Israel. But they did *not* look for a crucified Christ; rather for a royal, imperial personage, who was to break the yoke of Rome, and make Jerusalem the capital of the world. When, therefore, they heard of the cross, it was indeed a stumbling-block to them, since at once it made all their visions of temporal glory fall to the ground. They were not prepared to accept this view of a Redeemer, and hence rejected Jesus. **Unto the Greeks foolishness**—The Greeks were the people of cultured and worldly knowledge. They saw no beauty in the idea of a crucified Saviour. They judged the plan of salvation by the standards of human wisdom, and called it fol-

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23 after wisdom: but we preach <sup>3</sup> Christ crucified, unto Jews a stumbling-block, and unto Gentiles foolishness;

24 but unto <sup>4</sup> them that are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.

25 Because the foolishness of God is

<sup>3</sup> Or, a Messiah.— <sup>4</sup> Or, they called themselves.

ly. Even so do many of the learned ones of earth now.

24. **Unto them which are called**—Greek, “The called themselves.” While all men have been called, they who were minded to obey received the name of “called ones.”—*Clement of Alexandria*. **Both Jews and Greeks**—Both called by the same voice, and receiving salvation upon the same terms. **Christ**—The repetition of Christ gives solemnity, at the same time that it concentrates the power and wisdom in the person of Christ, as if it had been said, Christ, even in his humiliation unto death, the power of God and wisdom of God.—*Alford*. **The power of God**—Christ is *God's power* because through the objective and historic birth and death of Jesus, and through inward subjective spiritual union with him, God stretched out and stretches out his mighty arm to rescue those who obey the divine summons. Similarly “the word of the cross is the power of God.” (verse 18; Rom. 1. 16,) for through the word the power operates.—*Beet*. **The wisdom of God**—“The called ones,” who have accepted Christ, enjoy the insight of faith, have their spiritual intelligence quickened, and can see wisdom in the redemption through the cross where others can only see folly. So the ancient astronomer, who held to the view that the earth was the center of the universe, said: “The stars and the planets are in disorder. If God had consulted me, I could have shown him a better plan for the arrangement of the heavenly bodies.” But when the observer gets at the true laws of the solar system, with the sun as its center, he sees earth and all the planets moving in perfect order.

25. **The foolishness of God**—The apostle is evidently here speaking from a human point of view, and implies merely that which appears foolishness in God. He here has in mind God's dealings with men in the Gospel, such as the procuring of salvation through the crucifixion of Christ, and other things connected therewith, which, in the judgment of self-styled wise men of this world, who measure every thing by the

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is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

26 For ye see your calling, brethren, how that <sup>14</sup>not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called:

27 But <sup>15</sup>God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak

<sup>14</sup> John 7, 48.—<sup>15</sup> Psa. 8, 2.

measure of their fancied wisdom, appeared contrary to reason.—*Kling.* **Is wiser than men**—Surpasses in wisdom not only *all which they call* by that name, but *men*, all possible wisdom of mankind.—*Alford.* **The weakness of God**—The things of his appointment which *appear* weak and insufficient to accomplish the end.—*Barnes.* **Is stronger than men**—Not only surpasses in might all which *they think powerful*, but *men themselves*, all human might whatsoever.—*Alford.* The means chosen by one wiser than ourselves often appear to us foolish, simply because our ignorance prevents us from seeing their suitability. Therefore, if we admit God's superior wisdom we shall not be surprised that he uses means which to us seem foolish. Nor need we be surprised that his instruments seem to us, and in themselves are, *weak*. For, in the hands of the Almighty, the weakest instruments are capable of producing results far surpassing all that man can do.—*Beet.*

26. **Ye see** [Rev. Ver., *Behold*.]—Rather, in the imperative, *Behold, contemplate your calling.* **Your calling**—God's *calling* of you into the kingdom of Christ, implying your acceptance and all its blessed results.—*Whedon.* **Not many**—These words imply that some of the early Christians were men of education and influence; an interesting coincidence with Rom. 16. 23; Acts 18. 8; 13. 12; 22. 3.—*Beet.* **Wise men after the flesh**—He means in that wisdom which may be acquired by human diligence without the teaching of the Holy Spirit.—*Estins.* What was true in Corinth was true on a larger scale in the whole Roman world. The sages of the age of Tacitus, Seneca, Pliny, and hundreds of lesser *literati* and philosophers, deemed Christianity unentitled to investigation. And yet, according to the skeptical historian Lecky, and others of the same school, the true cause of the triumph of Christianity in the Roman Empire was not miracles, but the obvious superiority of Christianity over all rival systems of religion.—*Whedon.* **Not many mighty**—The ancient

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wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

26 For <sup>5</sup>behold your calling, brethren, how that not many wise after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, <sup>6</sup>are called: but God chose the foolish things of the world, that he might put to shame them that are wise, and God chose the weak things

<sup>5</sup> Or, ye behold.—<sup>6</sup> Or, have part therein.

Christians were for the most part slaves and men of low station, the whole history of the expansion of the Church is in reality a progressive victory of the ignorant over the learned, the lowly over the lofty, until the emperor himself laid down his crown before the cross of Christ.—*Olshausen.* **Not many noble**—Ancient Corinth was celebrated for its brilliant, high-born, old nobility. Its great, ancient families, now extinct, were instances how transient are all earthly grandeurs. But of the new and rather vulgar aristocracy of modern Corinth, restored from the conflagration inflicted by Mummius, probably few deigned to enter the house of Justus, near the synagogue, where Paul held forth the foolishness of preaching to busy Corinth.—*Whedon.* **Are called**—They were *called*, indeed; but they never by faith became *the called*. They were *called* to repentance and faith; but never were *the called*, upon repentance and faith, *to be saints*.—*Whedon.*

He doth not say not any, but not many, lest the world should think that Christians were deceived through their simplicity and weakness; one rich Joseph of Arimathea, one honorable Nicodemus, one Crispus, a ruler of the synagogue, but not many men of might and power.—*Burkitt.*

27. **God hath chosen**—It is a divine revolution, and we have the divine honor of being its instruments *chosen of God*.—*Whedon.* **Foolish things**—The Greek neuter, *foolish things*, suggested hereby similar words in verse 25, looks at the objects without considering whether or not they are personal. It refers frequently to what are in fact persons. So Luke 1. 35, "the holy things;" Gal. 3. 22; John 6. 37.—*Beet.* **Of the world**—Of (belonging to) the world; not in the eyes of the world, which would not fit the sense, for they were not only seemingly but really foolish, when God chose them.—*Alford.* **The weak things**—The reception of the Gospel chiefly by the lower classes (verse 26) rose from its very nature. It is good news of a deliverer, and would be ac-



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things of the world to confound the things which are mighty;

28 And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, *yea*, and <sup>16</sup> things which are not, <sup>17</sup> to bring to nought things that are:

29 That no flesh should glory in his presence.

30 But of him are ye in Christ Je'sus, who of God is made unto us wisdom,

<sup>16</sup> Rom. 4. 17.—<sup>17</sup> Chap. 2. 6.

ceptable only as men felt their need of a deliverer. But every kind of earthly good tends to make us unconscious of our need, and independent of divine help. Intellect, education, rank, and wealth, so precious when laid on the altar of God, yet, by promising to supply of themselves our need, tend to keep men from accepting the Gospel. Comp. Rom. 11. 9. On the other hand, misfortune and want have led many to cry to God for help. In full view of this, God chose an instrument of salvation which he foresaw would appeal with greatest force to men in humble positions.—*Beet.*

28. **Base things**—A Church composed mainly of slaves and lowly people, yet destined to undermine and destroy the organized paganism of the noble and upper classes, supported by all the power of the state. Who would have thought in Paul's day that the Parthenon at Athens would ever become a Christian Church? **Things which are not . . . to bring to naught**—“Nothings and nobodies.” So are they viewed by the world; so in themselves they are. Yet, through the divine gift which they have received, they are intrinsically and truly the realities, and their opponents are *the shams*. Nero, the Roman Empire, Jove, paganism, pagan philosophy, are all *the transient*; God, Christ, Christianity, the Church, are alone the permanent and the eternal.—*Whedon*. **Things that are**—Whose existence seems to be a power, and, therefore, a reality. By choosing as His instruments things reckoned to be nothing, and passing by things reckoned to be much, God made the latter to be practically nothing.—*Beet.* All the *things that are*, all the *realities* of the world, are of absolutely *no account*, unassignable, in God's spiritual kingdom.—*Alford*.

29. **That no flesh**—Or, as it is in the more forcible Greek, *that all flesh should glory not in his presence*. For truly it is God on one side and all flesh on the other arrayed in each other's

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of the world, that he might put to shame the things that are strong; 28 and the base things of the world, and the things that are despised, did God choose, *yea* <sup>7</sup> and the things that are not, that he might bring to 29 nought the things that are: that no

30 flesh should glory before God. But of him are ye in Christ Je'sus, who was made unto us wisdom from God,

<sup>7</sup> Many ancient authorities omit *and*.

presence. It is the infinite *reality* in comparison with the finite *unreality*.—*Whedon*. **Should glory**—It denotes a rising or gladness of spirit which has always in view the object, external or internal, which called it forth, and which is ever ready to express itself in words. It thus combines the meanings of *rejoice*, *exult*, and *boast*.—*Beet.* **In his presence** [Rev. Ver., *Before God.*]—Who watches perishing flesh and blood lifting itself up because of something man thinks he can do.—*Beet.*

30. **But of him are ye**—“*Ye are*,” says the apostle, after speaking of “things that are not” and of “things that are,” he turns to his fellow-believers and says, “but ye *are*.” And whence is this existence found? *From him*, from God himself, as its immediate origin and still continuous author.—*T. D. Bernard*. **In Christ**—See Rom. 6. 11: “Christ is the element in which you live and from which you draw your life.”—*Beet.* **Who of God is made unto us wisdom** [Rev. Ver., *Who was made unto us wisdom from God.*]—Standing us instead of all earthly wisdom, and raising us above it by being *from God*; wisdom, in his incarnation, in his life of obedience, in his teaching, in his death of atonement, in his glorification and sending of the Spirit, and not only wisdom, but all that we can want to purify us from guilt, to give us righteousness before God, to sanctify us after his likeness.—*Alford*. Having him they have a key which unlocks the mysteries of God's eternal purpose of mercy and of the present life; and, knowing this eternal purpose and the eternal realities, they are able to choose aright their steps in life.—*Beet.* **Of God** [Rev. Ver., *From God.*]—Emphatic repetition of *from Him*. He who gave Christ to be the element of our life also gave him to be in us as our *wisdom*. **Righteousness and sanctification**—*Righteousness* and *sanctification* are closely joined, and form but one idea, that of

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and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption:

31 That, according as it is written, <sup>18</sup> He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.

<sup>18</sup> Jer. 9. 23.

Christian justification; *righteousness* the negative side in Christ's justifying work—*sanctification* the positive, the imparting to us of sanctifying grace.—*Bisping*. **Redemption**—Satisfaction made for our sin, or perhaps *deliverance* from all evil, and especially from eternal death, as Rom. 8. 23; but I prefer the other.—*Alford*. The general statement here suggests deliverance from the material and moral evils and powers around us, from death, and from the grave.—*Beet*. As regards the work of grace God sees nothing but Christ Jesus alone and altogether. He is made to us *wisdom* by enlightening us, *righteousness* by justifying us, *sanctification* by purifying us, *redemption* by purchasing us into immortality. He justifies as Christ crucified and risen without us; he sanctifies as Christ crucified and risen within us; he glorifies in virtue of both, as Christ enthroned in the fullness of consummate power, and at length "subduing all things unto himself."—*W. A. Butler*.

One day as I was passing into the field suddenly this sentence fell upon my soul: "Thy righteousness is in heaven;" and methought I saw, with the eyes of my soul, *Jesus Christ* at God's right hand. There was my righteousness, so that wherever I was, or whatever I was doing, God could not say of me, "he wants my righteousness," for that was just before him. I also saw, moreover, that it was not my frame of heart that made my righteousness better, nor yet my bad frame that made my righteousness worse, for my righteousness was Jesus Christ himself.—*J. Bunyan*.

31. As it is written—This is evidently a quotation made from Jer. 9. 23, 24. It is not made literally, but the apostle has *condensed* the sense of the prophet into a few words and has retained essentially his idea.—*Barnes*. **He that glorieth**—The whole passage shows that there is no cause for glorying or taking pride in human wisdom, or human power, or human rank, for all these come to naught. Yet there is a legitimate ground of glory to "the called," those who have accepted the Gospel message. We can glory in Christ Jesus who has given us victory over the world's power, a divine wisdom beyond the world's knowledge, a rank above an emperor's. Our glory is in Christ, but all in

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<sup>8</sup> and righteousness and sanctification,

31 and redemption: that, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.

<sup>8</sup> Or, both righteousness and sanctification and redemption.

Christ, and in Christ alone. **Let him glory in the Lord**—On the one hand Christ is "set forth, evidently crucified among us;" on the other we see "the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God." On the one hand, "Behold the Man!" and the crown of thorns; on the other, "Behold the Man!" and the crown of glory, and the raptures of an assembled universe! But whether on the cross or on the throne in him alike and in him alone will we glory.—*W. A. Butler*. **The Lord**—Its precise reference here is uncertain and unimportant. For to boast in the Son is to boast in the Father. Compare Rom. 5. 11. Perhaps it is better to retain the common New Testament use; and to suppose that Paul refers to our exaltation in him "who has become to us wisdom."—*Beet*.

## Authorities to be Consulted.

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## Practical Thoughts.

## THE CROSS OF CHRIST.

1. The aim of Gospel preaching should be to hold prominently before men the cross of Christ as the ground of man's salvation. Ver. 17.

2. The cross of Christ has no beauty nor wisdom to those wanting the insight of faith, which alone reveals its glory and power. Ver. 18.

3. The cross of Christ brings to naught all the wisdom and the might of unregenerate man. Vers. 19, 20.

4. The cross of Christ shows God's power in the fact of salvation, and God's wisdom in its plan. Ver. 21.

5. The cross of Christ is the lowly element, despised by the world, which brings mighty results to pass. Vers. 27, 28.

6. The cross of Christ can be accepted only by him who is willing to cast aside all worldly and self-seeking aims. Vers. 27, 28.

### Sermon Outline.

BY REV. K. P. KETCHAM, D.D.

INTRODUCTION.—1. *How meet the religious nature, wants, questions, of men?* Answer, Preach! Ver. 17. The power of the Apostolic Church and of the true Church ever since—on the human side—has been in preaching, not in rites or ritualistic ceremonies.

2. *What manner of preaching?* The Greek mind says, That which is characterized by discoveries and speculations of human reason. The themes of worldly wisdom by the methods of worldly wisdom. Others, conceding the necessity of a divine revelation, say, Let our theme be the truth of Christ, but let it be discussed in the aspects and methods of human wisdom and speculation. The apostle says, Neither the *subject-matter* nor the *methods* of worldly wisdom should obtain in our preaching.

THEME.—Intellect in preaching—use and abuse of it, or, more definitely, The exclusion of human

wisdom from our preaching. A. Grounds of this. B. Extent.

A. *Grounds*.—1. Human speculations do not compass the realities. Men in evident ignorance must have supernatural revelation, and in evident sin must have supernatural atonement. The man who in health of body and blindness of mind said, "I have in the years past thought the subject over long and carefully, and I have come to the decision deliberately that I have no need of Jesus Christ as a Saviour in the sense you preach," two weeks later, in the enlightenment of sudden sickness and death, could only whisper in dismay, "Who will carry me over the river?" Until the truth of Christ appear it is the unanswered question of the ages, Who, as to information or power, will carry us over the emergencies of sin and sorrow and death?

2. But may we not present Gospel truth in the forms and aspects, and by the methods of, human wisdom? Only as, in the most absolute sense, subordinate and contributive to the power of the Holy Ghost. Chap. 2, 4, 5.

This leads to

B. The *extent* of this exclusion.—1. Christ crucified the central theme of all truth, but not necessarily the formal and exact theme of every sermon. We may, through subordinate themes, preach up to this as a culmination, and down from it to practical experience.

2. Nor, in excluding presumption of intellect, are we to preach in contempt and neglect of intellect. Not in ignorance or indolence, nor in weakness of demonstration, did Paul preach, or expect others to.

We are to preach in intelligence, wisdom, diligent mental preparations, and in that reason which at the proper point demands humility and faith and "the abnegation of reason."

The humble can: 1. *Know* the truth. Ver. 26.  
2. *Teach* the truth. Vers. 27, 28.

ABSTINENCE FOR THE SAKE OF OTHERS.—1 COR. 8. 1-13.

**GOLDEN TEXT.**—*If meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth.*—1 COR. 8. 13.

TIME.—A. D. 57. See on Lesson III.

CONNECTING LINKS.—See on last lesson, topic No. 3.

INTRODUCTION. *The idol-meats.*—When the heathens offered sacrifices of such animals as were fit for food, a part of the carcass was burnt on the altar, a part was given to the priest, and on the remainder the offerers feasted with their friends, either in the idol's temple, or at home. Sometimes, also, a part was sent as a present to such as they wished to oblige; and if the sacrifice was large, a part of it was sold in the public market.—*Macknight.* The eating of these portions of the idol-meats was forbidden by the apostles and elders assembled at Jerusalem. Acts 15, 29; 21, 25. That Paul, in the whole of this passage, makes no allusion to that decree, but deals with the question on its own merits, probably is to be traced to his wish to establish his position as an independent apostle, endowed with God's Holy Spirit sufficiently himself to regulate such matters. But it also shows *how little such decisions were at that time regarded as lastingly binding on the whole Church:* and how fully competent it was, even during

the lifetime of the apostles, to Christians to open and question, on its own merits, a matter which *they* had, for a special purpose, once already decided.—*Alford*. In his theoretic convictions Paul, as we shall see, sides with the liberals. But he rebukes their reckless application of these principles, and also that pride of knowledge which they manifested; and for the regulation of their conduct in this case he enjoins the exercise of a self-denying love, that subordinated the use of its liberty to a regard for weak brethren, and gladly renounced its rights in order to avoid all occasions for scandal.—*Kling*.

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1 Now <sup>1</sup>as touching things offered unto idols, we know that we all have <sup>2</sup>knowledge. Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth.

2 And <sup>3</sup>if any man think that he knoweth any thing, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know.

<sup>1</sup> Acts, 13, 26.—<sup>2</sup> Rom, 14, 14.—<sup>3</sup> Gal, 6, 3; 1 Tim, 6, 4.

## 1. Touching things offered unto idols

[Rev. Ver., *Concerning things sacrificed to idols.*]

—See Introduction above. **We know**—We admit; we cannot dispute; it is so plain a case that no one can be ignorant on this point. Probably these are the words of the Corinthians, and perhaps they were contained in the letter which was sent to Paul.—*Barnes*. **We all have knowledge**—It is manifest from verses 4-6, which are said in the widest possible reference to the faith of *all Christians*, that *all Christians* must be intended here also. But then (verse 7) he says, “*there is not in all men this knowledge*,” obviously pointing at the weak Christian brother; and how are the two to be reconciled? By taking, I believe, the common-sense view of two such statements, which would be, in ordinary preaching or writing that the first was said of what is *professed* and *confessed*; the second of what is *actually* and *practically apprehended by each man*.—*Alford*. **Knowledge puffeth up**—Mere *knowledge* in this case is not a safe guide; its effect *may* be to puff up, to fill with pride and self-sufficiency, and to lead you astray. *Charity*, or love, as well as knowledge, should be allowed to come in as a guide in such cases, and will be a safer guide than mere knowledge.—*Barnes*. An unloving *knowledge*, even where it is real *knowledge*, often results in haughty assumption and in scorn of humbler minds. Knowing perfectly the nothingness of idols, the proud believer might be reckless of the difficulties and dangers of feeble minds.—*Whedon*. **Charity** [Rev. Ver., *Love*.]—An unfortunate rendering of the Greek for *love*. Paul affirms that it is *love*, mixed with *knowledge*, which perfects *knowledge* into true wisdom. **Charity edifieth**—Love, by its own nature, prompts us to use our powers for the good of others, and especially their highest good, that is, the development of their spiritual life. It is,

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1 Now concerning things sacrificed to idols: We know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge puffeth up,

2 but love <sup>1</sup>edifieth. If any man thinketh that he knoweth any thing, he knoweth not yet as he ought to know;

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *buildeth up*.

therefore, better than knowledge.—*Beet*. The thought and expression in *edifieth* is altogether peculiar to Paul's mode of looking at and speaking of things. The whole Christian life is contemplated by him as a building resting on the one foundation, Jesus Christ—a figure which finds a point of connection with our Lord's statement concerning the houses built on the rock and in the sand. The edification here meant combines the theoretical and practical elements, and comprises every thing which serves to advance the Christian life.—*Neander*.

The understanding does not redeem the heart, for then were the learned the converted. Reason cannot give man regeneration, though it can make him proud, and lead him into wrong paths. Reason is not the redeemer of men, but Jesus Christ, the crucified one.—*A. Caspers*.

2. If any man—Destitute of this love, and with knowledge alone. **Think that he knoweth**—The case supposed is the only one which can occur where love is absent and conceit present; a man can then *only think he knows*, no real *knowledge* being accessible without humility and love.—*Alford*. **Knoweth any thing**—Thinks that what he knows is something of intrinsic value.—*Beet*. **He knoweth nothing** [Rev. Ver., *not yet*.]—He that knows every thing with his brain, but nothing with his heart, fails of true wisdom. Satan is the model of intellect without love.—*Whedon*. All knowledge which does not teach us that even the highest knowledge cannot of itself bless, is defective even as knowledge.—*Beet*. **As he ought to know**—If any one is conceited of his knowledge, is so vain and proud and self-confident that he is led to despise others and to disregard their true interests, he has not yet learned the very first elements of true knowledge as he ought to learn them. **True**

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3 But if any man love God, 'the same is known of him.

4 As concerning therefore the eating of those things that are offered in sacrifice unto idols, we know that <sup>5</sup>an idol is nothing in the world, <sup>6</sup>and that there is none other God but one.

5 For though there be that <sup>7</sup>are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, (as there be gods many, and lords many,)

6 But <sup>8</sup>to us there is but one God, the

<sup>4</sup> Exod. 34, 12; Nah. 1, 7; Matt. 7, 23; Gal. 4, 9; 2 Tim. 2, 19; <sup>5</sup> Isa. 41, 21; <sup>6</sup> Deut. 4, 39; Isa. 44, 8; <sup>7</sup> John 10, 34; <sup>8</sup> Mal. 2, 10; Eph. 4, 6.

knowledge will make us humble, modest, and kind to others. It will not puff us up, and it will not lead us to overlook the real happiness of others.—*Barnes*.

3. If any man love God . . . known of him—We are ignorant of much that concerns us. But, if we love God, his infinite intelligence, which comprehends fully our nature, our weakness, our circumstances, and our needs, is at work for us, watching us with ceaseless vigilance, and choosing for us whatever is best. And, that God knows us, is a pledge that his purposes about us will not fail. Thus, love, whether we know much or little, places us under protection and guidance of the infinite knowledge of God.—*Beet*.

4. Concerning the eating—Some Christians thought that eating the meat which had been presented at the idol-altars was giving countenance to idolatry. Others, equally sincere, and more enlightened, said, "the idol is nothing; the meat is like other meat, and we have a right to eat it." An idol is nothing in the world [Rev. Ver., *No idol is anything in the world.*]—That the idols of the heathens (meaning, not strictly the images, but the persons represented by them) have no existence in the world. That they who worship idols worship devils, the apostle himself asserts, (chap. 10, 20;) but that is no contradiction to the present sentence, which asserts that the deities imagined by them, Jupiter, Apollo, etc., have absolutely no existence. Of that subtle power which, under the guise of these, deluded the nations, he here says nothing.—*Alford*. An idol is a nothing in the world, expresses the true, contemptuous idea of Paul, both as a Jew and a Christian. But the more exact verbal rendering preserves more clearly Paul's antithesis: *There is no idol-god in the world, none other God but one.*—*Whedon*. None other God but one [Rev.

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3 but if any man loveth God, the same 4 is known of him. Concerning therefore the eating of things sacrificed to idols, we know that no idol is *any thing* in the world, and that there is

5 no God but one. For though there be that are call gods, whether in heaven or on earth; as there are gods many,

6 and lords many; yet to us there is

Ver., *No God but one.*]—The great principle which Judaism asserted against nearly all the world, that of the essential unity and spiritual-ity of God.

5. There be—In men's estimation and worship. That are called gods—"*So-called gods,*" conceptions to which the name *god* is given. The fancy of the Greeks peopled with deities the *heaven*, visible and invisible, and the mountains, woods, and rivers of *earth*.—*Beet*. In heaven or in earth—Chrysostom says, that *in heaven* means the sun and stars, worshiped by Persians and others; *on earth*, the gods and demigods in human form, as in the Greek mythology.—*Whedon*. Gods many and lords many—That *gods many and lords many* refers only to the subjective thought of the heathen, is proved by the express statement of verse 4, and by the subjective reference, "to us," in verse 6. Of the objective and superhuman and infernal basis and source of idolatry, (see chap. 10, 20,) there is no hint here. In the thought and life of the heathens the *gods many and lords many* were, and are, a terrible reality.—*Beet*.

6. But to us—Before Paul advises his readers to abstain in certain cases from meat offered to idols, in order to show that his advice is not prompted by latent suspicion of the reality of their power, he proclaims the great truth, destructive of all idolatry, that there is one God; and the great Christian truth that this one God operates and rules through the one Master, Jesus Christ.—*Beet*. One God, the Father—Father here used not of his divine paternity of us, but in relation to the Son. *God*, therefore, is not here so styled God as to exclude Christ from the Godhead, any more than *Christ* is styled *Lord* to exclude God from the Lordship. One is distinctly God, and the other Lord, yet both are both God and Lord.—*Whedon*. Of

## Authorized Version.

Father, <sup>9</sup> of whom are all things, and we <sup>10</sup> in him; and <sup>11</sup> one Lord Je'sus Christ, <sup>12</sup> by whom are all things, and we by him.

7 Howbeit *there is* not in every man that knowledge; for some with conscience of the idol unto this hour eat *it* as a thing offered unto an idol; and their conscience being weak is defiled.

8 But meat commendeth us not to God: for neither, if we eat, <sup>13</sup> are we the

## Revised Version.

one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we unto him; and one Lord, Je'sus Christ, through whom are all things, and we through him.

7 Howbeit in all men there is not that knowledge; but some, being used until now to the idol, eat as *of* a thing sacrificed to an idol; and their con-

8 science being weak is defiled. But meat will not commend us to God:

<sup>9</sup> Acts 17. 28; Rom. 11. 36. — <sup>10</sup> Or, for him. — <sup>11</sup> Acts 2. 36; Phil. 2. 11. — <sup>12</sup> John 1. 3; Col. 1. 16; Heb. 1. 2. — <sup>13</sup> Or, have we the more.

whom are all things—Creatures, with or without reason, as in Col. 1. 16; John 1. 3. Whatever exists has sprung from our Father.—*Beet* We in him—The leading idea here is, probably, that to God Christians owe their hopes and happiness.—*Barnes*. One Lord Jesus Christ—The divine manifestation on earth of the hidden Infinite in heaven. Lord, as being the Executive of the divine power and grace immediately upon us, on earth.—*Whedon*. Notice the one God opposed to many gods, and one Lord to many lords.—*Alford*. By whom [Rev. Ver., Through whom] are all things—As above. Jesus of Nazareth, the anointed King, the one Master, whose commands we obey, is the one Agent through whose activity the universe was created; and through whose incarnation, teaching, death, and resurrection, in a special sense, we believers are what we are.—*Beet*.

To us there is but one Christ. He who was announced as the woman's seed; he of whom Abel's sacrifice spoke; he of whom Enoch prophesied as the Avenger; he who was revealed to Abraham as his seed; he of whom Job spoke as the Redeemer; he of whom Moses spoke as the Prophet; of whose work the whole book of Leviticus is full; he of whom David sang as the Sufferer, yet the King; he of whom Isaiah and all the prophets sang; he who proclaimed himself as come to seek the lost; to whom John the Baptist pointed as the Lamb of God; who hung on the cross, and died in anguish, yet rose again, and ascended on high; he is the one Christ whom we recognize.—*Bonar*.

7. Not in every man [Rev. Ver., in all men] that knowledge—Is not in them in their individual apprehension, though it is by their profession as Christians.—*Alford*. For some—Converted heathens who were unable to cast away altogether the deeply inwoven marks made on their minds by the idolatry of earlier days. Instances of this are very common now on the mission field.—*Beet*. With

conscience of the idol [Rev. Ver., Being used until now to the idol.]—With consciousness, intellectual and moral, that recognizes it as an idol god, and not a mere nothing.—*Whedon*. Unto this hour [Rev. Ver., Until now.]—By the expression *even until now*, it is shown that these weak ones must have belonged to the *Gentile* part of the Corinthian Church, to those who had *once*, before their conversion, held these idols to be veritable gods. Had they been *Jewish* converts it would not have been consciousness of the idol which would have troubled, but apparent violation of the Mosaic law.—*Alford*. Eat it as a thing offered [Rev. Ver., sacrificed] unto an idol—Owing to their former contact with idolatry, they look upon the meat, while eating it, as an idol sacrifice. To those who know that idols do not exist, it is but common meat.—*Beet*. Being weak—Still under the power of old pagan association of thought. Defiled—Induced by Christian example to eat, and yet trembling with fear for the imaginary guilt of their own act, they really transgress their own conscience, and are thus condemned, and perhaps learn to brave conscience and thus become wicked.—*Whedon*.

8. But—This verse, as being repeated by Paul from the Corinthians' letter, might also be included in quotation marks. It is, in continuation, their apology for free eating of idol sacrifices. Their first position was, (verse 4,) we all have a knowledge that an idol god is a nothing; this, their second, is, that meat being a physical substance, is not impregnated with any moral quality, and so can make a man neither better nor worse. Paul grants this last position, and yet shows that it does not secure the safety of the practice.—*Whedon*. Meat commendeth us not—Food of any kind, including idol sacrifices. Such will not lay us more completely on the altar of God, or place us before him more favorably. Neither

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better; neither, if we eat not, are we the worse.

9 But take heed, lest by any means this <sup>d</sup>liberty of yours become a stumblingblock to them that are weak.

10 For if any man see thee which hast knowledge sit at meat in the idol's temple, shall not the conscience of him which is weak be emboldened to eat those things which are offered to idols;

11 And through thy knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died?

12 But <sup>12</sup>when ye sin so against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, ye sin against Christ.

c Or, have we the less.—d Or, power.—e Edited.—12 Matt. 23, 40; Acts 9, 4.

## Revised Version.

neither, if we eat not, <sup>2</sup>are we the worse; nor, if we eat, <sup>3</sup>are we the better. But take heed lest by any means this <sup>4</sup>liberty of yours become a stumblingblock to the weak. For if a man see thee which hast knowledge sitting at meat in an idol's temple, will not his conscience, if he is weak, <sup>5</sup>be emboldened to eat things sacrificed to idols? For <sup>6</sup>through thy knowledge he that is weak perisheth, the brother for whose sake Christ died. And thus, sinning against the brethren, and wounding their conscience when it is weak, ye sin against Christ. Where-

2 Gr. do we lack.—3 Gr. I see abound.—4 Or, power.—5 Gr. be builded up.—6 Gr. in.

. . . better . . . worse—Eating, or abstinence from, any kind of food, cannot make the spiritual life richer or poorer. Thus, before showing how greatly we may injure a brother by eating an idol sacrifice, Paul proves that to abstain from this or any other kind of food will do us no real harm.—*Beet.*

9. **But take heed**—*But*, that is, I acknowledge this indifference, this license to eat or not to eat; *but* it is on that very account, because it is a matter indifferent, that ye must take heed.—*Alford.* **This liberty of yours**—“*This right of yours.*” Liberty to eat any thing, involved in the great truth of ver. 8. **Become a stumbling-block**—The particular stumbling-block in this case would be, the tempting them to *act against their conscience*, a practice above all others dangerous to a Christian.—*Alford.* **To them that are weak**—To those professing Christians who are not fully instructed in regard to the true nature of idolatry, and who still may have a superstitious regard for the gods whom their fathers worshiped.—*Barnes.*

10. **If any man**—Scarcely firmly converted from idolatry.—*Whelan.* **See thee who hast knowledge**—And whose known intelligence would increase his influence over a weak brother.—*Beet.* **Sitting**—Greek, *reclining*, as was the ancient custom at meals. **Idol's temple**—Greek, an *idoleum*. The word is only used by Jewish writers, apparently to avoid designating heathen temples by the sacred word *naos*, used to express the temple of Jerusalem. 1 Mac. 1. 47; 10. 83. It is a kind of parody on the names of the temples, as derived from the divinities to which they are dedicated.—*Dean Stanley.* **Emboldened**—Built up. The beauty

of the apostle's *word* is lost, it being the same Greek word as for *edified* in verse 1. The weakling is *built up*, but in a bad direction, to a proud wrong-doing.—*Whelan.* This verse warns us not to force upon others our own standard of right and wrong. That which is right to us may be wrong, and, therefore, very hurtful, to others less instructed.—*Beet.*

11. **Through thy knowledge**—If the strong man had not known that idols do not exist at all, the weak brother would not have been overcome by his example, (an example the stronger because of his well-known *knowledge*), and led to eat that which he believed to be wrong, and thus made still weaker till he fell from Christ and fell into eternal death. Notice the threefold darkness of this picture: there perishes a brother for whom Christ died. Same argument, Rom. 14. 15.—*Beet.* **The weak brother perish**—The sense is that the *tendency* of this course would be to lead the weak brother into sin, to apostasy, and to ruin.—*Barnes.* **Christ died**—A pathetic and forcible argument drawn from the depths of Christian truth and Christian feeling, and possible for a Christian solely to adduce. Will you not suffer a privation in behalf of the soul for which *Christ died*?—*Whelan.*

12. **When ye sin against the brethren**—By leading them through example into sin would be sin to them. **Wound their weak conscience**—Literally, “*smiting their conscience.*” By leading them to do what their conscience disapproves we create in them unintentionally a consciousness of having done wrong, and thus inflict upon them a blow in the inmost and most vital part of their being.—*Beet.* his death. This was a new argument in the

## Authorized Version.

13 Wherefore, if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend.

world, drawn from a new source and in behalf of a new virtue, namely, tenderness for the souls of men.—*Whedon*.

13. **Meat**—In the most general sense—*food*, *i. e.*, any article of food, as verse 8; purposely indefinite here: “if such a matter as food.”—*Alford*. **Make my brother to offend** [Rev. Ver., *stumble*].—The word is derived from a Greek term, which originally signified the *trap-stick* to which the bait was fixed, by touching which the animal sprung the trap, and so was caught. Hence it signifies any moral *entice-ment* by which a person is *entrapped* into error, sin, or apostasy. *Snares*, or *entrapment*, is the true moral idea.—*Whedon*. It does not mean if the eating of meat should *enrage* or *irritate* another, but if it is the occasion of his being led into transgression.—*Barnes*. **I will eat no flesh**—Mark how delicately the apostle passes now from the second person plural, *ye*, to the first person singular, *I*. He enjoins upon them a somewhat burdensome *take heed*, but when it comes to the intensity of perfect self-denial *he takes it upon himself*. It is a sublime, nay, a daring, height of self-consecration, rising to the level of an *apostle*, and that apostle, *Paul*.—*Whedon*. By turning suddenly away from his readers to himself, and by giving voice to his own deliberate resolve to make any sacrifice for any length of time rather than cause a brother's fall, Paul puts to shame by his own example the possible objection that it is unfair to ask us to give up our liberty because of the ignorance of others.—*Beet*. **While the world standeth** [Rev. Ver., *for evermore*].—The phrase “I will never eat meat” would express the idea.—*Barnes*.

No man ever breathed so freely when on earth the air and atmosphere of heaven as the Apostle Paul; no man ever soared so high above all prejudices, narrowness, littleness, scruples, as he, and yet no man ever bound himself as Paul bound himself to the ignorance, the scruples, the prejudices, of his brethren.—*F. W. Robertson*. On the supposition that the use of wine and other liquors may be in themselves lawful, and that you *might* be safe in using them, yet *others* may be led by your example to an improper use of them, or contract a taste for stimulating drinks that may end in their ruin. Would it be right for *you* to continue the use of wine in such circumstances? Would Paul have done it? Would he not have adopted the noble principle in this chapter, that

## Revised Version.

fore, if meat maketh my brother to stumble, I will eat no flesh for evermore, that I make not my brother to stumble.

he would not touch it while the world stands if it led him to sin.—*Barnes*.

## Authorities to be Consulted.

See on the last lesson in Schaff, Farrar, Conybeare and Howson, and Robertson. Sunday Magazine, 1871, 114. Bonar's Bible Thoughts and Themes, vol. iii. Pulpit Analyst, ii, 88. Sermons, by F. W. Robertson, on The Law of Christian Conscience; T. Chalmers, on the Modesty of True Science; R. South, The Plea of a Tender Conscience; J. P. Newman, (Temperance Sermons,) Self-Denial a Duty and Pleasure; D. A. Clark, The Enlightened Conscience. Foster's Cyclopaedia of Illustrations, [numbers marked with a star refer to poetical quotations,] ver. 1: 589, 591, 595, 600, 6779, 10131, 10132; 2: 3493, 6049, 10138, 10141; 4: 3152, 9072, 10619; 5: \*1704, 10866; 9: 2010; 10: 5675; 13: 4878, 8466, 8474, 9889.

## Practical Thoughts.

## [PRINCIPLES OF THE CHRISTIAN LIFE.]

1. The Christian life requires both knowledge and love, but love as the greater and more essential. Ver. 1.
2. The Christian life requires us to recognize that our knowledge is but partial and far from complete. Ver. 2.
3. The Christian life through love will lead to knowledge of God and of his will. Ver. 3.
4. The Christian life should be lived with the consciousness of God's omniscient eye. Ver. 4.
5. The Christian life should be regulated by the supreme law of Jesus Christ as Lord. Ver. 6.
6. The Christian life should be influenced not by our personal rights, but by our relation to our fellow-men. Vers. 7-9.
7. The Christian life should have for its aim to build up, and never to injure, others over whom we may have an influence. Ver. 12.

## Sermon Outline.

BY REV. A. P. FOSTER, D.D.

In Scripture the abstract is commonly taught through the concrete. So this chapter, in setting forth a rule for a heathen land in a time long past, does but make prominent through this thin veil a mighty principle.



**I. The Principle Stated.**

1. In answering questions of casuistry the criteria of judgment must first be established. Knowledge, as one, is insufficient without love. Vers. 1-3.

2. Knowledge, given us by Christianity, delivers us from superstition's yoke. We are subject to God alone. Christ frees us from prejudices, fears, and needless burdens. Vers. 4-6, etc.

3. To one who fails of this knowledge, and thinks an innocent thing wrong, it is wrong for him. Ver. 7.

4. Our enjoyment, then, of that which is innocent may lead another with uninstructed conscience into sin. Vers. 9-11.

5. Such an example ceases to be innocent if set with the knowledge of its possible results, for it violates the law of love. Ver. 12.

6. Thus we come to a great principle, namely, We must abstain from things innocent in themselves if our indulgence would tempt a Christian brother to sin. Ver. 13.

**II. The Principle Limited.**

The principle is not to be pushed to extremes. We are not to be the slaves of every weak-minded,

superstitious, or ignorant person who may possibly be influenced by us.

1. We are to avoid that which tempts another to sin, but not necessarily that which he condemns as sinful. The revision reads *stumble*, not *offend*.

2. We are to avoid that which tempts a Christian brother. He is partially instructed, is attempting to live according to his conscience, and is most likely to be influenced by our example. But the principle applies to the impenitent in proportion as these things are true of them.

3. The principle commonly relates to matters involving but slight self-denials, personal gratification in food, pleasures, and the like.

**III. The Principle Applied.**

The question of eating meat offered to idols never comes up to-day, but similar questions do, regarding, among others, (1) the use of intoxicants, (2) amusements, (3) extravagance in living, (4) the observance of the Sabbath.

*Conclusion.*—A great responsibility is involved in the principle. Each one must decide for himself; questions depending on circumstances, matters of expediency, must be left to the individual conscience.



A. D. 57.]

## LESSON V.

[May 4.

CHRISTIAN LOVE.—1 Cor. 13. 1-13.

GOLDEN TEXT.—Love is the fulfilling of the law.—Rom. 13. 10.

TIME.—A. D. 57. See on Lesson II.

CONNECTING LINKS.—See on Lesson III, topic No. 7.

INTRODUCTION.—"This may," says Meyer, "without impropriety be called 'a Psalm of Love'—the 'Song of Love' of the New Testament. See Psa. 45, title." On each side of this chapter the tumult of argument and remonstrance still rages, but within it all is calm: the sentences move in almost rhythmic melody; the imagery unfolds itself in almost dramatic propriety; the language arranges itself with almost rhetorical accuracy. We can imagine how the apostle's amanuensis must have paused to look up in his master's face at the sudden change of his style of dictation, and seen his countenance lighted up as it had been the face of an angel, as the sublime vision of divine perfection passed before him.—*Stanley*. The central gift of Christianity—not transient, but permanent—the diamond excellence of which all other virtues are a phase, is *love*. And to rouse his Corinthians above their eagerness after the transient, the apostle tasks all his powers to present the diamond before their eyes in its most attractive brilliancy. All critics view this passage as one of Paul's genuine gems. It has something of the rhythm, as well as the splendor, of poetry. But it is brief and condensed, and not one word is inserted for mere fine writing; for Paul does not one moment forget his argument; the object of which is, to impress his brethren that that one virtue within the reach of all, the permanent heritage of the Church, is divine love. The chapter has three distinct stages or paragraphs. The *first* declares, with intense hyperbole, the absolute worthlessness of every virtue if love be wanting, (1-3); the *second* draws a brief picture of love in actual life, (4-8); the *third* (8-13) traces our progress through transient developments, in contrast with the abiding three graces, faith, hope, and love. Paul, as on other occasions of deprecatory remark, speaks in the first person.—*Weldon*.

Authorized Version.

1 Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not

Revised Version.

13 If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am

1. Though I speak—See where he sets out: first beginning with that which seemed to them

so great and wonderful, the gift of tongues.—*Chrysostom*. Speak with the tongues—Pro-

## Authorized Version.

<sup>1</sup> charity, I am become *as* sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.

<sup>2</sup> And though I have *the gift* <sup>2</sup> of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, <sup>3</sup> so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing.

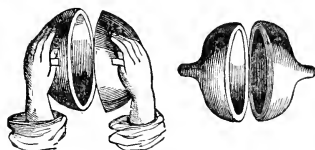
## Revised Version.

become sounding brass, or a clanging

<sup>2</sup> cymbal. And if I have *the gift* of prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have <sup>3</sup> not love, I am nothing. And if I

<sup>1</sup> Rom. 14; <sup>1</sup> Tim. 1. 5.—<sup>2</sup> Matt. 7. 22.—<sup>3</sup> Luke 17. 6.

cisely what this gift of tongues was in the early Church is not easy to determine. It was not, however, a power to preach the Gospel in various languages, but was probably an inspired utterance in other than the speaker's own language, and sometimes in no human language. The gift was certainly possessed in the early Church, but soon passed away. **Of the angels**—Separated for emphasis from *of men*, and marking the summit of possibility in this gift.—*Beet*. By the tongues of angels the apostle meant the methods, whatever they are, by which angels communicate their thoughts to each other, and which must be a much more excellent language than any that is spoken by men.—*Macknight*. **Have not charity** [The Rev. Ver. has the word *love* throughout the chapter in place of *charity*.]—*Love to all, in its most general sense*, as throughout the chapter; no distinction being here drawn between love to *man* and to *God*, but the *general principle* dealt with, *from which both spring*.—*Alford*. **Sounding brass**—*Bronze*: a word denoting always in the Bible copper, either pure, or containing, as usual, a small proportion of other metals, generally tin. Brass, that is, an alloy of copper and zinc, has not, I believe, been found among the many metallic relics of the past.—*Beet*. **Tinkling cymbal** [Rev. Ver., *Clanging cymbal*.]—Two concave metallic plates struck



Cymbals.

against each other, and giving a sound varying with the size of the instrument. Possessing no variation of tone or mellowness, they served as a fit illustration of a vain clatter, while the richer ring of the *sounding brass* indicated the vain glory of the ostentation of tongues.—*Whedon*.

We might call it one of the misfortunes of our English version that the Greek word for love has been translated *charity*. But it is rather the fault of the language itself than of the translator. When St. Jerome came to translate this part of the New Testament he could find no word in the Latin language which would properly fit the true Christian idea of divine *love*. Paganism had not the word, because paganism had never possessed the idea. The word *amor* came most near, but that had degrading associations. He selected the Latin word *caritas*, signifying *dearness*, which has been used in most of the translations of modern Europe. But this word becoming *charity* in English, has sunk to mean mere almsgiving, or favorable construction of others' actions, as when we say a *charitable* opinion.—*Whedon*.

**2. Prophecy**—Gifts of divine inspiration, but not necessarily of foretelling the future. **Understand all mysteries**—The many-sided purpose of redemption is called (Rom. 16. 25; Eph. 1. 9; 3. 3; 6. 19; Col. 1. 26 f.; 2. 2; 4. 3) a mystery kept in silence (even from angels, Mark 13. 32; 1 Pet. 1. 12; Eph. 3. 10) during eternal times, but now made known. To proclaim this mystery to all was the life-work of Paul, (Eph. 3. 9; 6. 19; Col. 4. 3,) who was thus a steward of the mysteries of God. 1 Cor. 4. 1.—*Beet*. **And all knowledge**—Whatever the mind of man has acquired by ordinary methods of study, these not excluding (chap. 12. 8) the special assistance of the Spirit. Such knowledge would neither include, nor be included in, *all the mysteries*. **And all faith**—*All faith*, (literally, *all the faith*,) hardly, as Stanley implies, "*all the faith in the world*," but, rather, "all the faith required to," etc.; or, perhaps, the article conveys the allusion to our Lord's saying, (Matt. 17. 20; 21. 21,) "all that faith," so as, etc.—*Alford*. **And have not charity**—This suggests, (the hypothetical form of the sentence forbids us to say that it proves,) and the cases of Balaam and Samson prove, that a man may have superhuman gifts and yet be destitute of spiritual life. A solemn warning to the Corinthians, who (chap. 1. 7) "fell short in no gift."—*Beet*. **I am nothing**—One may

## Authorized Version.

3 And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.

4 Charity<sup>5</sup> suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity<sup>a</sup> vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up,

<sup>a</sup> Matt. 6. 1, 2. — <sup>b</sup> 1 Pet. 4. 8. — <sup>c</sup> Or, is not rash.

accomplish wonders in the Gospel, yet, himself, remain untouched by its power. While it is generally true that God uses godly instrumentalities, it is not universally the case. Some men without the richness of grace within have yet done much for Christ and the Church, like a skeleton, whose long hand holds a light shining on others, yet of no avail to the form that holds it.

3. **Though I bestow all my goods**—The true and most significant sense is, "Though I dole away in mouthfuls all my property or estates." Who that has witnessed the almsgiving in a Catholic monastery, or the court of a Spanish or Sicilian bishop's or archbishop's palace, where immense revenues are syringed away in farthings to herds of beggars, but must feel the force of the apostle's half-satirical expression?—*MS. note by Coleridge, quoted by Stanley.* It is curious that the word "charity" has come to signify just that almsgiving which Paul here declares may be performed without it. Churches, colleges, almshouses, asylums, may all be founded by loveless men to perpetuate a name, or vainly to expiate their sins.—*Whedon.* **Give my body to be burned**—It is possible that some Christians had been put to death in this manner when Paul wrote this epistle, but it is more probable that he referred to this as *the most awful kind of death*, rather than as any thing which had really happened. Subsequently, however, as all know, this was often done, and thousands, and perhaps tens of thousands, of Christians have been called to evince their attachment to religion in the flames.—*Barnes.* **Have not charity**—By these extreme cases Paul makes us feel that actions have no intrinsic value, that their worth, both as manifestations of character and as spiritual gain to the actor, depends entirely upon their motive, and that the one motive essential to reward is love.—*Bect.*

Dr. Lightfoot suggests that this highest possible grade of self-sacrifice and of supposed merit was suggested to Paul by a boastful inscription on a tomb at Athens, (see Strabo, book 15. 1. 73,) which

## Revised Version.

bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and if I give my body<sup>1</sup> to be burned, but have not love, it profiteth me nothing. Love suffereth long, and is kind; love envieth not; love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not

<sup>1</sup> Many ancient authorities read that I may glory.

he may have seen, in memory of a fanatic who, in the time of Augustus, publicly devoted himself to death there by leaping with a smile on the funeral pyre: "Here lies Zarmanochegas an Indian from Barygese, who, according to the paternal customs of Indians, immortalized himself." Such cases enable us to conceive not only gifts to the poor, but self-immolation, without love and without real excellence.—*Bect.*

Giving is indeed a fruit of love, but it is not love itself; love is a spiritual gift which involves the heart, and not the hand alone; love denotes not that which the hand does, but which the heart feels.—*Luther.*

4. **Charity** [Rev. Ver., *Love*.]—The hyperboles of the apostle in the last paragraph rush like a cataract; the description of this paragraph flow like a gentle and limpid stream. He does not describe love in its heroic moods, dying for its loved objects, but in the aspects of ordinary life, and particularly in references to those vain glories and bickers among his Corinthians, of which love would be the corrective. He gives fifteen traits of love. The first three touch the patient kindness of love; the next eight are negatives, describing qualities which love does not exhibit, but which unfortunately the tempers of the Corinthians did; then four traits which our apostle's conduct was exhibiting toward them.—*Whedon.* **Suffereth long**—Continues in spite of conduct likely to quench it. This continuance often, but not always, shows itself in restraining anger. Hence, in the Bible, the word is often (Rom. 2. 4; 9. 22, etc.) used in this connection.—*Bect.* **And is kind**—*Long suffering* is the negative side, *kindness* the positive, of a loving temper; the former, the withholding of anger; the latter, the exercise of kindness.—*Alford.* **Envieth not**—We are never vexed at the excellence or success of those whom we love. **Vaunteth not itself**—The word in the original is a universal one; a good definition of its meaning is given by Basil, as including "all that a man takes upon himself, not from duty or necessity, but for the sake of self-exaltation." An equivalent English expression would perhaps be, *displays not it-*  
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5 Doth not behave itself <sup>6</sup> unseemly, seeketh <sup>7</sup> not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil;

6 Rejoiceth <sup>8</sup> not in iniquity, <sup>9</sup> but rejoiceth <sup>10</sup> in the truth;

7 Beareth <sup>10</sup> all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.

8 Charity never faileth: but whether

<sup>6</sup> Phil. 4. 8.—<sup>7</sup> Phil. 2. 4.—<sup>8</sup> Psa. 10. 3; Rom. 1. 32.—<sup>9</sup> 2 John 4.—<sup>10</sup> Or, with the truth.—<sup>10</sup> Gal. 6. 2.

*self.*—*Alford.* Not puffed up—Is free from the spirit of self-assumption or conceit of personal greatness, for love thinks of another and not of self.

5. Doth not behave itself unseemly—Lovelessness cares not how offensive its demeanor toward others. It cares not how much mortification it creates in other breasts by its coarse, offensive, or haughty style. Even religious people often clothe their religion in a hard, stiff, legal aspect, rendering it unattractive, and producing rejection by those whom it should win. On the contrary, true love, brought to the surface, seeks to please, and thereby sheds a *winsomeness* over the manners and character.—*Whedon.* Seeketh not her own—Love, just so far as it is pure love, thinks not of itself. It is happy in the happiness of others, having no regard for any happiness of its own excepting this very delight in the others' well-being. Its very excellence is, that it places its own happiness in the happiness of others. Is not easily provoked [Rev. Ver. omits *easily*.] Literally, "is not moved to anger." Not here a simple purpose to punish, as in Eph. 4. 26, but the vindictiveness which so often accompanies it. To this, love never prompts; though it often compels us to punish.—*Bee.* Thinketh no evil [Rev. Ver., *Taketh not account of evil*.]—Not only plots no evil, but does not even suspect any against the beloved person. As a spark which falls into the sea, hurts not the sea, but is itself extinguished, so let any thing evil befall the loving soul, and it will soon be extinguished without disquietude.—*Chrysostom.*

6. Rejoiceth not in iniquity [Rev. Ver., *unrighteousness*.]—We are not pleased at the wrongdoing of those whom we intelligently love. For we feel instinctively that by wrong-doing they injure themselves. For example, many a bad father is sorry to see his children walking in his steps.—*Bee.* Rejoiceth in the truth [Rev. Ver., *Rejoiceth with the truth*.]—The truth being personified, and meaning especially the spread

## Revised Version.

behave itself unseemly, seeketh not its own, is not provoked, taketh not

6 account of evil; rejoiceth not in unrighteousness, but rejoiceth with the 7 truth; <sup>2</sup> beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth 8 all things. Love never faileth: but whether *there be* prophecies, they shall

<sup>2</sup> Or, *covereth*.

among men (as opposed to unrighteousness) of the truth of the Gospel, and, indeed, of the truth in general—in opposition to those who (Rom. 1. 18) "hold down the truth in unrighteousness"—who (2 Tim. 3. 8) "withstand the truth."—*Alford.*

7. Beareth—The word *bear* refers probably to ungrateful conduct in the person loved, and is thus parallel to "long-suffering" in verse 4; *endures* refers to any hardship involved in helping those we love. Beareth all things—Rather, *covereth all things*. Such is the strict meaning of the Greek word. To render it *beareth* gives the same sense as *endureth* in the last clause. The word *covereth* implies the idea expressed by Pope in his "Universal Prayer:"

"Teach me to feel another's woe,  
To *hide* the fault I see;  
That mercy I to others show,  
That mercy show to me."

So does a mother seek to *cover* the faults of her child; so would Paul rather cover than expose the errors of his Corinthians.—*Whedon.* All things—That is, all things *which can be borne with a good conscience*, and this applies to all *four* things mentioned: all things, namely, which can be borne, believed, hoped, or endured.—*Alford.* Believeth all things—Unsuspectingly believes all that is not palpably false, all that it can with a good conscience believe to the credit of another. Compare James 3. 17, "easy to be entreated;" *Greek, easily persuaded*.—*D. Brown.* Hopeth—Namely, even against hope—hoping what is good of another, even when others have ceased to do so.—*Alford.* Endureth—See Rom. 2. 7. Love prompts us to continue doing good to those we love in spite of difficulties and perils. Paul's own example. 2 Tim. 2. 10.—*Bee.*

8. Charity [Rev. Ver., *Love*] never faileth—Paul now proceeds to show the permanency of love as compared with the other endowments in the Church. Love will never cease to irradiate

## Authorized Version.

*there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away.*

9 For <sup>11</sup> we know in part, and we prophesy in part.

10 But <sup>12</sup> when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.

11 When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things.

<sup>11</sup> Chap. 5. 2.—<sup>12</sup> 1st. 60. 19; Jer. 31. 34.—Or. reasoned.

the world when the special manifestations of the Spirit shall have passed away. Seek that which endures rather than those gifts which are transient. **Prophecies . . . fail . . . tongues . . . cease**—A primary fulfillment of Paul's statement took place when the Church attained its maturity; then "tongues" entirely "ceased," and "prophesyings" and "knowledge," so far as they were supernatural gifts of the Spirit, were superseded as no longer required when the ordinary preaching of the word, and the Scriptures of the New Testament collected together, had become established institutions.—*D. Brown.* **They shall fail**—There is a double reference here to the Church on earth and the Church in heaven. On earth the tongues and prophetic gifts ceased as soon as the Gospel outgrew their need; in heaven they will be superseded by the quick spiritual perceptions of another world. But forever on earth and forever in heaven love will still endure. **Knowledge . . . vanish away**—All the knowledge which we now possess, valuable as it is, will be obscured and lost, and rendered comparatively valueless in the fuller splendors of the eternal world.—*Barnes.* It does not mean, however, that we will enter the heavenly state in ignorance, losing all knowledge of earth, so that the wise man and the babe, the student and the idler, will commence eternity on the same footing.

9, 10. **We know in part**—Our knowledge and our prophesying (utterance of divine things) are but *partial*, embracing *but a part*; but when that which is *perfect* (entire, universal) shall have come, this *partial* shall be abolished—superseded.—*Alford.* Just as the flickering torch lights the darkness in part and passes out of sight when the sun rises. **When that which is perfect is come**—Unquestionably the time alluded to is that of *the coming of the Lord*: see

## Revised Version.

be done away; whether *there be* tongues, they shall cease; whether *there be* knowledge, it shall be done

9 away. For we know in part, and

10 we prophesy in part: but when that which is perfect is come, that which is in part shall be done away.

11 When I was a child, I spake as a child, I felt as a child, I thought as a child: now that I am become a man, I have put away childish things.

verse 12, and this applies to *all these*, not to the last (*knowledge*) only.—*Alford.* **Shall be done away**—The imperfect knowledge is as far surpassed by the perfect as a wax-light is by the sunshine.—*Hedinger.*

11. **When I was a child**—The apostle illustrates the permanency and greatness of charity, as compared with other gifts, by showing that while *they* belonged to the infancy of the Church, *it* is a trait of its maturity; while they are of the short earthly period, it belongs to the heavenly; they are put away, it endures through eternity. Those who were coveting the gift of tongues and prophetic inspiration were like children; those who sought the grace of love were like full-grown men. **I spake as a child**—Just beginning to articulate in a broken and most imperfect manner. The idea here is that our knowledge at present, compared with the knowledge of heaven, is like the broken and scarcely intelligible efforts of a child to speak compared with the power of utterance in manhood.—*Barnes.* The *child* first speaks, then gives evidence of observation, and then of reasoning.—*Beet.* **When I became a man, I put away**—The Rev. Ver. is much more accurate: *Now that I am become a man, I have put away childish things.* Not as if it were done on a set day, as implied in the Authorized Version. **Childish things**—Laid aside as useless the toys and school-books which once I prized and used.—*Beet.* How childish, then, for men to seek as the objects of living the frivolous aims which must soon be laid aside forever!

Just before his death, Sir Isaac Newton made this remark: "I do not know what I may appear to the world, but to myself I seem to have been only like a boy playing on the sea-shore, and diverting myself by now and then finding a smoother pebble or a prettier shell than ordinary.

## Authorized Version.

12 For<sup>13</sup> now we see through a glass,  
<sup>14</sup>darkly; but then<sup>15</sup> face to face: now  
 I know in part; but then shall I know  
 even as also I am known.

13 And now abideth faith, hope,  
 charity, these three; but<sup>d</sup> the greatest of  
 these is charity.

<sup>12</sup> 2 Cor. 3. 18; 5. 7; Phil. 3. 12.—<sup>14</sup> Matt. 18. 10; 1 John 3. 2.  
 —<sup>15</sup> Matt. 22. 38.—<sup>d</sup> in a riddle.

while the great ocean of truth lay all undiscovered  
 before me."—*Brewster's Life of Newton.*

12. Now—In our present condition, until the  
 Lord's coming.—*Alford.* See through a glass  
 [Rev. Ver., *In a mirror.*—Mirrors were known  
 in the earliest times. Exod. 38. 8; Wisdom 7.  
 26; Sirach 12. 2. They were usually circular  
 plates of metal, with a handle. See cut on  
 page 28. Their imperfect reflection suggested  
 this metaphor. The Gospel is a mirror (2 Cor.  
 3. 18) showing us, as in a camera obscura,  
 but imperfectly, the things of eternity.—*Beet.*  
**Darkly**—Literally, *in enigma.* We can no  
 more clearly understand the realities of eter-  
 nity than childhood can understand the ex-  
 periences of manhood. No words, however  
 plain, can make him realize them as they  
 really are. And so to us heaven and eternity  
 are problems and mysteries, illustrated only  
 by analogies which after all are enigmas.—*Whe-  
 don.* **Then face to face**—The veil that hides  
 from us the all-glorious Father of spirits shall  
 one day be withdrawn. The spiritual eye shall  
 be quickened to look into the heart and life of  
 the universe. The intercepting medium of  
 sense shall be swept away, and the soul of the  
 redeemed laid bare to the ineffable brightness  
 and beauty of God streaming full-orbed around  
 it.—*Caird.* **Now I know in part**—Those who  
 now know most and, moved by the Spirit, pro-  
 claim most fully the things of God, know and  
 speak only a fragment of what will in that day  
 be known universally. Consequently, their  
 gifts, so valuable now, will then be of no worth.  
 —*Beets.* **As also I am known**—In this life we  
 are known by God, rather than know him. See  
 Gal. 4. 9; chap. 8. 3, note.—*Alford.*

13. And now abideth faith, hope, char-  
 ity—How can faith and hope be said to endure  
 to eternity, when faith will be lost in sight, and  
 hope in fruition? With hope there is but little  
 difficulty; but one place has inscribed over its  
 portals, "Leave hope behind all ye that enter  
 here." New glories, new treasures of knowl-  
 edge and of love, will ever raise and nourish

## Revised Version.

12 For now we see in a mirror, <sup>3</sup>dark-  
 ly; but then face to face: now I  
 know in part; but then shall I <sup>4</sup>know  
 even as also I have been <sup>5</sup>known.

13 But now abideth faith, hope, love,  
 these three; <sup>6</sup>and the <sup>7</sup>greatest of  
 these is love.

<sup>3</sup> Gr. in a riddle.—<sup>4</sup> Gr. know fully.—<sup>5</sup> Gr. known fully.—  
<sup>6</sup> Or, but greater than these.—<sup>7</sup> Gr. greater.

blessed hopes of yet more and higher, hopes  
 which no disappointment will blight. But how  
 can faith abide—faith which is the evidence of  
 things not seen—where all things once believed  
 are seen? In the form of holy confidence and  
 trust, faith will abide even there. The stay of  
 all conscious created being, human or angelic,  
 is dependence on God, and where the faith  
 which comes by hearing is out of the question,  
 the faith which consists in trusting will be the  
 only faith possible. Thus hope will remain, as  
 anticipation certain to be fulfilled. Faith will  
 remain, as trust, entire and undoubting, the  
 anchor of the soul, even where no tempest comes.  
 —*Alford.* **Hope**—That even amid the highest  
 good looks for a still higher. We cannot re-  
 member any other passage in the Bible that in-  
 dicates the existence of progress for the soul in  
 heaven than this word in this place.—*Whedon.*  
**But** [Rev. Ver., *And.*—*But*, rather, "and,"  
 as there is not so strong opposition between  
 charity and the other two, faith and hope which  
 like it also "abide."—*D. Brown.* **The great-  
 est . . . is charity**—The greater because it  
 contains in itself the root of the other two; we  
 believe only one whom we love, we hope only  
 that which we love.—*De Wette.* Love is not  
 only an eternal grace, but the highest among the  
 eternal. Faith is indeed the condition to our  
 Christian life, but love is its completion. Faith  
 but unlocks the door by which we enter into  
 the blessedness of its superior love. Other  
 graces contribute to heaven; love constitutes  
 heaven, for a heart of love in a world of love is  
 heaven.—*Whedon.* The argument of verses 8-13  
 involves the important truth that the continuity  
 of human character is not broken either by  
 death or judgment, any more than it is now  
 broken by change of circumstances. For we  
 are told explicitly that when human knowledge  
 fades in the light of eternity even then love  
 will abide.—*Beet*

## Authorities to be Consulted.

See commentaries, and other works named  
 with Lesson III, and the following: Homilet-

ical Monthly, iii, 393, 594. Sunday Magazine, (1870.) 56, 109, 221, 370. Wesley's Works, vol. v. Preacher's Lantern, i, 725. Stems and Twigs, i, 42. Sunday Magazine, (1871.) 469. Guthrie's Speaking to the Heart, (four sermons.) Biblical Studies, 323. Jonathan Edwards, (a series of discourses.) Sermons, by D. L. Moody, on Love and Sympathy; A. P. Peabody, (in Christian Consolation,) on Life of the Affections; H. Blair, (two sermons;) C. G. Finney, on Selfishness Not True Religion; R. W. Hamilton, Recognitions in Heaven; W. Arnot, (in Roots and Fruits,) Faith, Hope, and Love. Foster's Cyclopaedia of Illustrations, [numbers marked with a star refer to poetical quotations.] ver. 1: 6108, 6110, 10194; 2: 10195, 10567; 3: 10433, 11782; 4: \*2073; 5: 586, 587, 4477, 5552, 5786, 9580, 11881; 7: 10466; 8: \*1467, 2726; 10: \*1436, \*1729, \*1768, 3495; 11: 9271; 12: 349, \*1122, \*1435, 1727, 1929, 2917, 3609, 9433, 9479; 13: 1857, 3676, 8578.

### Practical Thoughts.

[THE TRAITS OF CHRISTIAN LOVE.]

1. Love is the essential element which underlies all others as the basis of the Christian character. Vers. 1, 2.

2. Love is the all-important element which makes the Christian acceptable before God. Vers. 2, 3.

3. Love fulfills the law by its patient endurance of evils for Christ's sake. Ver. 4.

4. Love places self in the background and Christ before all. Ver. 4.

5. Love seeks not the evil in others but the good, and finds it even in the worst of men. Ver. 5.

6. Love is trustful, and hopes the best of all. Ver. 7.

7. Love endures in the Church, while the supernatural gifts have passed away. Ver. 8.

8. Love enters heaven, while human knowledge is only of the earth. Vers. 10-13.

### Sermon Outline.

BY REV. FRANK RUSSELL.

INTRODUCTION.—This unique chapter is the grand conclusion of all preceding. Hebrews included, Paul wrote one hundred chapters, and some appellation of Christ appears in every one excepting this. But in this Christ seems described in singular parallels. "All knowledge and all mysteries." "In him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." "Bestow all my goods to feed the poor." "He was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor."

"Is not easily provoked." "When he was reviled he reviled not again." Dean Stanley calls this a calm between chapters of storms.

#### I. *The theme.*

Not charity, but love. So Tyndale's, Cranmer's, the Geneva, and the Revised Version. The Greek word appears one hundred and fourteen times. Ninety-six times it is rendered love, including each time used by the Saviour and by John. The primitive meaning of its verb-root is "welcome," or "hospitality." It was not in classic Greek. This love was not known until it was born with Christ. Neither does our word love fully express it. All love, paternal, filial, fraternal, etc., is love, all differentiations, as leaf, bud, twig, branch; but this love is the tree, the roots, and the trunk. It is the fountain from which comes every sparkling drop of pure love; the ocean, that calls all waters its own; the blazing sun of fire that turns to fire all that touches it.

#### II. *Contrasted.*

1. Oratory, powerful among the Greeks, especially so at Corinth. But even tongues of angels were mere clatter without this love.

2. Prophecies, with mysteries and knowledge great, also in cultured Corinth, yet nothing.

3. Faith, even as Matt. 21. 21, is failure.

4. Charity, doling out one's goods to the poor till all are gone, is yet nothing.

5. The climax of martyrdom by burning would count nothing. Note—the perfection of morality is a failure. The very terms of these contrasts show good works will not secure salvation. God has said, and man must know, that it is mercy and not sacrifice.

#### III. *Its perfection described.*

1. Unselfish, envieth not, vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, seeketh not her own.

2. Of graceful purity, doth not behave itself unseemly.

3. Loyalty to truth disdains any unrighteousness, but rejoiceth in the truth.

4. Has capacity for suffering, suffereth long, and is kind, is not easily provoked, beareth all things, endureth all things.

5. Is confiding, thinketh no evil, is ever without suspicion, at least hopeth all things.

6. Is permanent. (1) Earthly things fail; prophecies, tongues, knowledge, things partial, childish things, dim-seeing. (2) Heavenly things abide. Face to face is our recognition of truths, of friends; love never fails, it is God.

Conclusion.—Old tradition says that Joseph, when garnering the grain of Egypt, scattered husks and chaff at fountains, on streams, and before winds, that the famine-stricken every-where might know that grain awaited them. We attain here only the hint of pure, exhaustless grain. Abundance awaits all, and in perfection. All may begin and grasp and hold this heavenly, god-like love. Faith enlightens, hope buoys, but love is the goal and abideth greatest over all.

A. D. 57.]

## LESSON VI.

[May 11.]

## VICTORY OVER DEATH.—1 Cor. 15. 50-58.

## GOLDEN TEXT.—Death is swallowed up in victory.—1 COR. 15. 54.

TIME.—A. D. 57. See on Lesson III.

CONNECTING LINKS.—See on Lesson III, topic No. 9.

INTRODUCTION.—This section concerning the resurrection is introduced by a question uncovering an objection to the teaching in the previous section of the chapter that the dead will rise, an objection based on the supposed impossibility of the process of resurrection. The objection was, perhaps, prompted by the crude teaching of some Jews that the resurrection body will be exactly the same as that laid in the grave. This objection Paul rebukes by pointing to God's works in nature, to the difference between the seed sown and the plant which perpetuates its life, and between the endless variety of living bodies on earth and the objects which shine and move above us in the sky. He declares that there is a similar difference between our present and future bodies, a difference of which he gives four powerful parallel descriptions. He thus shows that against his teaching the objection of verse 35 has no force. The story of Genesis tells us that the human body, even as at first created, and according to a constant divine order is imperfect. But through our relation to Christ we shall receive bodies like his. In other words, a change is absolutely necessary before we can attain the goal of our being. And it will come. Though all will not die, every one will pass through the needful change from mortality to immortality.—*Beet*.

## Authorized Version.

50 Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.

51 Behold, I show you a mystery;

<sup>4</sup> Matt. 16. 17; John 3. 3, 5.

50. Now this I say—He thus calls attention to something to be observed, and liable to be overlooked. Not only is the change of body possible, and according to natural and spiritual analogies, but it is necessary.—*Alford*. **Flesh and blood**—Denotes such bodies as we have here: bodies that are fragile, weak, liable to disease, subject to pain and death. They are composed of changing particles, to be repaired and strengthened daily; they are subject to decay, and are wasted away by sickness, and of course they cannot be fitted to a world where there shall be no decay and no death.—*Barnes*. **Cannot inherit**—The present tense sets forth the absolute impossibility in the nature of things.—*Alford*. They are not capable of enjoying the divine vision, nor of performing the exalted services, nor of relishing the pure pleasures, which constitute the glory and felicity of the kingdom of God.—*Macknight*. **The kingdom of God**—This is that happy place which Christ hath gone to prepare for the reception of his people. John 14. 2. In that place bodies composed of flesh and blood cannot live, because it affords no objects suited either to the senses or to the appetites of a fleshly body.—*Macknight*. Cor-

## Revised Version.

50 Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall

ruption is the quality that arises from the instability of the material particles, by which displacement, decay, and disintegration take place. Such a body as this cannot inherit incorruption, which implies a body suffering no decay or dissolution; a body of which every particle retains its place, with perfect health and durability. Before the present corruptible can put on this incorruption a change must take place.

51. Behold—Lift up your eyes upon the glorious picture I present.—*Wheaton*. **A mystery**—This is a peculiarly Pauline word, having its own precise meaning in the epistles; and that not as we understand it, "something beyond comprehension, or in itself deep or mysterious," but that which has not been made known to men until the revelation of Jesus Christ; a truth kept back until the due time for its announcement. Such a truth was this of the resurrection, not clearly set forth until this epistle was written. As Barnes says: "The word stands opposed to that which is revealed, not to that which is in itself plain. The doctrines to which the word relates may be in themselves clear and simple, but they are hidden in mystery until they are



Authorized Version.

We <sup>2</sup>shall not all sleep, <sup>3</sup>but we shall all be changed.

52 In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for <sup>4</sup>the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and <sup>5</sup>this mortal *must* put on immortality.

54 So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then

Revised Version.

not all sleep, but we shall all be

52 changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible,

53 and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on 54 immortality. But when <sup>1</sup>this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put

<sup>2</sup> 1 Thess. 4. 15.—<sup>3</sup> Phil. 3. 21.—<sup>4</sup> Matt. 24. 31.—<sup>5</sup> 2 Cor. 5. 4.

<sup>1</sup> Many ancient authorities omit *this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and.*

revealed." We shall not all—The emphasis is, both times, on *all*: "[*All of us*] shall not sleep, but [*all of us*] shall be changed;" that is, "the sleep of death cannot be predicated of [all of us,] but the resurrection-change *can.*"—*Alford*. *All of us* covers in both places the whole race; as suggested by the general term "flesh and blood."—*Beet*. **Sleep**—The sleep of death. **All be changed**—On this *change* we may note: (1) That it is a *change* that comes *upon*, and is *of*, the very body then being; the very same matter and substance. (2) That a *change* does not mean the bringing in any new material. (3) That ver. 53 shows that it consists in the assuming of immortality, with the modifications included therein, upon that very mortal body, and no other.—*Whedon*. It is nowhere asserted in the New Testament that we shall rise again *with our bodies*. Unless a man will say that the stalk, the blade, and the ear of corn are actually the same thing with the single grain which is put into the ground, he cannot quote Paul as saying that we shall rise again with the same bodies.—*Burton*.

52. **In a moment**—Literally, "In an atom," *scil.* of time; a point of time which cannot be cut or divided.—*Barnes*. **At the last trump**—The word "last" does not mean that there are to be several blasts of a trumpet on the final day, and that this was the last which should be blown, but simply that it would be *the* trumpet of the last day, after which no more would be heard.—*Ruckert*. **The trumpet shall sound**—As the law was given with the sound of a trumpet, so the final judgment according to it. Heb. 12. 19.—*D. Brown*. See the Notes, First Quarter, Lesson XI, Verse 16. **Dead shall be raised**—Paul lingers, in repetition, over the coming change. The body doomed to decay will clothe itself with absence of decay; and

the body doomed to death will clothe itself in deathlessness. **We shall be changed**—We, (1 Thess. 4. 15,) the living, in contrast to *the dead ones*. It implies clearly that Paul did not know that long ages would pass before Christ's coming. But that he confidently expected to survive the day of Christ we cannot fairly infer. For, in rhetorical figure, he frequently identifies himself with that which he describes: so chap. 6. 15; 10. 22, 29; Rom. 3. 7; 7. 14, ff.; compare James 3. 9. Probably, in this matter, hope and fear alternated with his circumstances and his frame of mind.—*Beet*.

53. **This corruptible**—It is *human nature* in its essential elements, that is, to inherit eternity; not an ethereal rudiment just saved from the wreck of the former fabric, and just serving to connect, as by a film of identity, the earthly with the heavenly state.—*Isaac Taylor*. **Put on**—Literally, *shall clothe on*; the Greek being the word signifying to *put on* a garment.—*Whedon*. **Immortality**—Here only, besides 1 Tim. 6. 16, the word "immortality" is found. Nowhere is the immortality of the *soul* distinct from the body taught, a notion which many erroneously have derived from heathen philosophers. Scripture does not contemplate the anomalous state brought about by death as the consummation to be earnestly looked for, (2 Cor. 5. 4,) but the resurrection.—*D. Brown*.

Let us, therefore, look upon this flesh not so much with contempt of what it was and is, as with a joyful hope of what it shall be. And when our courage is assaulted with the change of these bodies, from healthful to weak, from living to dead, let us comfort ourselves with the assurance of this change from dust to incorruption.—*Bishop Hall*.

54. **So when**—At the coming of the Lord, the resurrection of the dead, and the transfor-

## Authorized Version.

shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.

55 O<sup>1</sup> death, where *is* thy sting? O<sup>2</sup> grave, where *is* thy victory?

56 The sting of death *is* sin; and the strength of sin *is* the law.

57 But<sup>3</sup> thanks *be* to God, which giveth us<sup>4</sup> the victory through our Lord Je'sus Christ.

<sup>1</sup> Isa. 25. 8; Rev. 20. 14.—<sup>2</sup> Hosea 13. 14.—<sup>3</sup> Or, hell.—<sup>4</sup> Rom. 4. 15.—<sup>5</sup> Rom. 7. 25.—<sup>6</sup> 1 John 5. 4.

mation of the living saints. Brought to pass—The apostle reads between the lines of the prophetic announcement and sees a deeper meaning than even the prophet saw to his own words. Death is swallowed up—This is a quotation, exact in sense, from Isa. 25. 8. "He has swallowed up death for ever." The word *victory* was suggested to Paul by an Aramaic word of that meaning similar to the Hebrew word rendered "for ever." It also recalls verse 26. In this quotation lies an argument. For Isaiah's words imply clearly a complete and eternal undoing of the work of death; and this can be only by resurrection of the dead.—*Beet.*

55. O death, where is thy sting [Rev. Ver., *thy victory*.]—These words were evidently suggested by Hosea 13. 14, which reads: "From the hand of Hades I will rescue, and from death I will redeem them. Where is thy righteous claim, O death? where is thy sting, O Hades?" This ancient prophecy foretells complete deliverance from death. Thus, in what seems to be merely a shout of victory, Paul adds another Scripture proof to the arguments of this chapter.—*Beet.* Probably Paul did not intend this as a direct quotation; but he spoke as a man naturally does who is familiar with the language of the Scriptures, and used it to express the sense which he intended without meaning to make a direct and literal quotation.—*Barnes.* Death—Referring here, undoubtedly, to death in the proper sense; death as prostrating the living and consigning them to the grave.—*Barnes.* Where—As though looking round for something which has disappeared.—*Beet.* The "where" implies their past victorious destroying power and sting, now gone for ever, obtained through Satan's triumph over man in Eden, which enlisted God's law on the side of Satan and death against man. Rom. 5. 12, 17, 21.—*D. Brown.* Thy sting—A *sting* as of a scorpion, (Rev. 9. 10,) or a serpent, as in Gen. 3. and Num. 21. O grave—The word translated

## Revised Version.

on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written, Death

55 is swallowed up<sup>2</sup> in victory. O death, where is thy victory? O death, where is thy sting? The sting of death is sin; and the power of sin is the law; but thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Je'sus Christ. Wherefore,

<sup>2</sup> Or, victoriously.

*the grave* literally signifies *the invisible world*, or the place where departed spirits, both good and bad, remain till the resurrection. The place where the spirits of the righteous abide the Jews called *Paradise*; the place where the wicked are shut up they called *Tartarus*, after the Greeks.—*Macknight.*

56. The sting of death is sin—Sin is *the sting of death* in that but for sin even death (the abstract power personified) could not have pierced us. For death is the punishment of sin. By committing sin we gave our enemy a weapon with which he slew us. But death cannot hurt those saved from sin. For to them death is gain. To them, therefore, death is a serpent which has lost its sting, retaining its outward form, but powerless to injure.—*Beet.* Strength [Rev. Ver., *power*] of sin is the law—The Jews maintained that a man might be justified and saved by obedience to the law. Paul here shows that it is the law which gives its chief vigor to sin, and that it does not tend to subdue or destroy it, and that power is seen most strikingly in the pangs and horrors of a guilty conscience on the bed of death.—*Barnes.*

57. Thanks be to God—God alone is the author of this victory. He formed the plan; he executed it in the gift of his Son; and he gives it to us *personally* when we come to die.—*Barnes.* Giveth us the victory—The last victory over death. But this implies all earlier victories. For, only those who conquer sin and the world now will "attain to the resurrection from the dead." Phil. 3. 11.—*Beet.* Through our Lord Jesus Christ—There is one who has satisfied *the law*; has thence taken out *the strength of sin*; thence destroyed *the sting of death*; and so wrought the resurrection. This exposition shows that the reference to *the law* is logically in the straight line of Paul's argument.—*Whedon.* By his death, thus destroying the power of death; by his resurrection and triumph over the grave; and by his *grace* imparted

## Authorized Version.

58 Therefore, my beloved brethren,<sup>11</sup> be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord forasmuch as ye know that<sup>12</sup> your labour is not in vain in the Lord.

<sup>11</sup> 2 Chron. 15. 7. — <sup>12</sup> Isa. 3. 10; Rev. 22. 12.

to us to enable us to sustain the pains of death, and giving to us the hope of a glorious resurrection.—*Barnes*. In verses 56, 57 we have an epitome of the Gospel: sin, the law, death, the gift of salvation from God through Christ.—*Beet*.

58. Therefore—A conclusion to the argument of the entire chapter. Paul's *therefore* is always important, as the hinge upon which a mighty door opens. My beloved brethren—Paul's heart hovers in full affection, in passing from those fearful scenes, over his brethren, as if he would provide for their safety. Be ye steadfast, unmovable — *Steadfast, unmovable, and abounding*, form a climax. *Steadfast* means positive, intrinsic firmness; *unmovable* implies resistance to the mightiest outward pressures and fiercest onsets; *abounding* means energetic action. Some Christians appear to do nothing; some to do a little; others abound in every good word and work.—*Whedon*. Work of the Lord—Chap. 16. 10, the work given us by Christ to do.—*Beet*. The *work of the Lord* is the *Christian life*, with its active and passive duties and graces, the bringing forth the fruits of the Spirit.—*Alford*. Your labor—Suggests the weariness frequently involved in the work for Christ. Not in vain—It is not as if you were to die and never live again. There will be a resurrection, and you will be suitably recompensed then. What you do for the honor of God will not only be attended with an approving conscience, and with happiness here, but will be met with the glorious and eternal rewards of heaven.—*Barnes*. In the Lord—For Christ is the element in which we toil; and nothing done in him can be without result. This verse reminds us how often doubts about doctrine lessen the abundance and the constancy of Gospel work. For such work appears useless to those who are not firmly convinced of the truth of the Gospel. All Christian activity flows from fully believed Christian doctrine.—*Beet*.

## Authorities to be Consulted.

See list of works on Lesson III. and the following: Life in a Risen Saviour, by R. S. Candlish. Homiletical Monthly, iii, 595. Preacher's Lantern, i, 730, 179, 742. Sunday Magazine, (1866,) 436, 519. Sermons, by W.

## Revised Version.

my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not<sup>3</sup> vain in the Lord.

<sup>3</sup> Or, void.

Jay, on The Final Change; J. Logan, The Christian's Victory; G. W. Bethune, Victory Through Christ; C. Spurgeon, Series 1, Thoughts on the Last Battle; J. Drummond, Spiritual Labor; W. B. Reed, Steadfast and Unmovable. Foster's Cyclopedia of Illustrations, [numbers marked by a star refer to the poetical volumes,] ver. 52: \*2668, 5030, 5038, 7811, 12068; 53: \*3197; 54: 1272, \*1932, 2926, 7127; 55: \*984, 1354, 1754, 7209; 56: 5311, 11392; 57: 1307, 1315, 1371; 58: \*951, \*1977.

## Practical Thoughts.

## [THE BELIEVER'S VICTORY.]

1. The believer's victory is a future victory to be consummated only when this corruptible body shall have passed away. Ver. 50.
2. The believer's victory is the complete inheritance of the kingdom of God, reserved for the followers of Christ. Ver. 50.
3. The believer's victory will be a change to the living and a resurrection to the dead. Vers. 51, 52.
4. The believer's victory will be a triumph with sound of trumpets and glorious accompaniments. Ver. 52.
5. The believer's victory will be eternal when this mortal shall have put on an undying immortality. Ver. 53.
6. The believer's victory shall cause death to be forgotten and swept away in a glorious life. Ver. 54.
7. The believer's victory is won only through the Lord Jesus Christ. Ver. 57.
8. The believer's victory should be an encouragement to us in our struggle, by its assurance that our labor will not be in vain. Ver. 58.

## Sermon Outline.

BY REV. A. H. TUTTLE, M.A.

The instinct of the human heart personates death as a dreaded foe. Nearly every literature presents it as a god, or goddess, or angel, or alarming presence, wrapped about in mystery, seeking the destruction of men.

In Scripture death is represented as an enemy, (1 Cor. 15. 26,) dreadful in his approach, (Rev. 6. 8,) blinding souls with fear. Heb. 2. 16. But it is the

peculiar glory of the Gospel that it reveals the fact of the conqueror conquered.

I. **Death's victory.**

II. **Death's overthrow.**

I. *Death's victory is—*

1. The apparent destruction of our life. Whatever our hope of perpetual life may be, it is never supported by the fact of death. The story that the corpse tells is corruption, dishonor, weakness, life lost in the abyss of material nature. No grave ever surrenders its inhabitant. No voice answers our appeal to those which have fallen asleep.

If, through our powerful love of life, we persist in our belief that the soul escapes from the perishing body into another state of existence, death makes even that hope vague. What are we out of the body but formless spirits? The instinct of life demands a being more real than an eternal ghost-existence.

2. Another feature of the victory of death is, that by bringing the soul to face the solemnities of the invisible realm, it rouses the sense of guilt. The shudder of the soul from the possible loss of its being cannot compare with the indescribable horror of meeting a God whose just law we have offended. "The sting." Ver. 56. Instance death scenes. This dread may be suppressed but only temporarily.

II. *Christ has turned Death's victory into defeat—*

1. By his death, in which he saves us from our sins, (ver. 3,) and

2. By his resurrection, which establishes his claim as a divine Saviour, and proves his omnipotence in the realm of death.

*First.* (1) The horrible sense of guilt is removed

by Jesus' vicarious death. The challenge of the law is answered by the cross. The alarmed conscience is quieted by an appeal to Christ's blood. Rom. 1. 8, sq. Thus death's "sting" is removed. (2) Immediately following faith in Christ's redeeming work is a communication of his life to the believer. And it is a witness to our immortality. The doctrine of the New Testament is that the work of grace by which a soul is renewed is identical with that very life by which God raised up Jesus from the dead. Eph. 1. 19, 20. As sin is the very root of death, so righteousness is life. As one assimilates divine goodness, lives in conscious purity of heart, energy of faith, union with the Holy Spirit, he is possessed of an inspired force that makes him completely alive, so that he has an inner assurance of deathlessness. This is the very power of the resurrection. Phil. 3. 8-11.

*Secondly.* Christ is victorious over death by his resurrection. (1) That he rose from the dead is proven by many and competent witnesses. Vers. 4-11. (2) That the fact carries with it the fact of the general resurrection. Vers. 12, 13. (3) It fits in as an essential feature of the divine plan of redemption. Vers. 20-26. (4) Its mystery does not invalidate the fact, for the most familiar processes of nature are involved in equal mystery. Ver. 35. sq.

It is enough for us to know that He who is our life entered the sepulcher, and in that august conflict, of which God only knows the mystery, "Death was swallowed up in victory." He comes from the realm of the dead and proclaims that his life is ours.

Finally, our duty growing out of this Christ-wrought victory is steadfastness in his work. Ver. 58. What is done *in him* is eternal.

THE UPROAR AT EPHESUS.—Acts 19. 23-41; 20. 1, 2.

**GOLDEN TEXT.**—Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing.—PSA. 2. 1.

TIME.—A. D. 57. For rulers, etc., see Lesson I.

PLACE.—Ephesus, in Asia Minor.

CONNECTING LINKS.—(With Lesson II.) (1) The disciples separated from the Jews. Acts 19. 9, 10. (2) The sorcerers and their books. Acts. 19. 11-20. (3) Paul's plan of journeying. Acts 19. 21, 22.

INTRODUCTION.—There is a close resemblance between this tumult at Ephesus and the tumult at Philippi. Both arose, not from the Jews, but from the Gentiles; this peculiarity distinguishes them from all the persecutions recorded in the Acts, to which the Christians were exposed; all others were persecutions instigated by the Jews. And both originated from sordid motives: in Philippi, the masters of the Pythonic slave feared that they would lose their gains; in Ephesus, Demetrius and his craftsmen feared that their craft would be brought to naught.—*Gloag. The temple of Diana at Ephesus.*—Her temple at Ephesus, built in a marsh on layers of charcoal and hides stuffed with wool, as protection against earthquakes, called by Pliny the wonder of the world, having been burned in the year 355 B. C. in the night in which Alexander the Great was born, was rebuilt with greater magnificence. It is said to have had one hundred and twenty-seven columns, sixty feet high, each the gift of a king; and that seven of these, made of jasper, were brought to Constantinople and applied to the support of the dome of St. Sophia.—*Jacobson.* Central within the whole structure was a small roofed chapel or cella containing

the sacred image. The temple itself inclosing the chapel was an immense oblong four hundred and twenty-five feet in length and two hundred and twenty feet in breadth. The whole was without roof, being, in fact, rows of columns, colonnades, surmounted by a horizontal entablature. The whole was simply an honorary open columnar structure inclosing the cell that inclosed the goddess.—*D. D. Whedon.*



The Theatre at Ephesus.

Authorized Version.

23 And <sup>1</sup>the same time there arose no small stir about <sup>2</sup>that way.

24 For a certain *man* named De-me'tri-us, a silversmith, which made silver

Revised Version.

23 And about that time there arose 24 no small stir concerning the Way.

For a certain man named De-me'tri-us, a silversmith, which made silver

<sup>1</sup> 2 Cor. 1, 8.—<sup>2</sup> Chap. 9, 2.

23. About the same time—Only a general indication. The time of Paul's intended departure is not marked with strict exactness.—*Jacobson.* Concerning that way [Rev. Ver., *Concerning the Way.*].—That is, concerning the religion of Jesus Christ which Paul inculcated, that method of worshipping God and securing an interest in eternal life which he taught. See

chap. 9. 2.—*Gloag.* See note, Lesson II., ver. 9.

24. Demetrius—If not proprietor of the entire manufactory or sale of the shrines, this person was at any rate qualified in brain and tongue for leading a stirring movement. The preaching of Paul, the growth of his Church, the spreading skepticism chording with the

## Authorized Version.

shrines for Di-an'a, brought no <sup>3</sup> small gain unto the craftsmen;

25 Whom he called together with the workmen of like occupation, and said, Sirs, ye know that by this craft <sup>4</sup> we have our wealth.

<sup>3</sup> Chap. 16. 16, 19.—<sup>4</sup> Prov. 15. 27; 1 Tim. 6. 10; Rev. 18. 16.

advancing civilization of the age, was making its impression. Of this the shrine market was test, and was exhibiting unwelcome proofs. A counter movement was imperatively necessary.—*D. D. Whedon.* **Silver shrines**—These silver shrines were small models of the temple of Diana, containing an image of the goddess. They were purchased by the pilgrims to the temple, and on their return home were set up



The Ephesian Diana.

as objects of domestic worship. The miniature temples would doubtless find a great sale. The temple of Diana was celebrated throughout the world, and the goddess was the chief object of the worship of proconsular Asia; and thus travelers and pilgrims to Ephesus would be anxious to carry away with them memorials of their visit.—*Gloag.* **For Diana** [Rev. Ver., *Of Diana*; margin, *Artemis*.]—Diana was worshiped under a variety of characters, as the goddess of hunting, of traveling, of the night, of childbirth, and under different names; in heaven she was

## Revised Version.

shrines of <sup>1</sup> Di-an'a, brought no little business unto the craftsmen; whom he gathered together, with the workmen of like occupation, and said, Sirs, ye know that by this business 26 we have our wealth. And ye see

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *Artemis*.

Luna, in the woods Diana, and in hell Hecate. There is, however, a decided difference between the Greek and the Ephesian Diana. The Greek Diana is represented with a bow in her hand, and dressed in a hunting habit, while the Ephesian Diana is represented as a female with many breasts, supposed to signify the fruitful attributes of Nature. It has been supposed that when the Athenians colonized Ephesus they found the worship of some Asiatic goddess established there, whose name they changed into Diana, from some fancied points of resemblance between her and their own goddess.—*Gloag.* **Brought no small gain** [Rev. Ver., *No little business*.]—The word rendered *gain* should rather be rendered *work* or *employment*.—*L. Abbott.*

As we look to the more elaborate reproductions of that type in marble, of which one may be seen in the Vatican Museum, we seem to be gazing on a Hindu idol rather than on a Greek statue. Its ugliness was perhaps the secret of its power. When art clothes idolatry with beauty, man feels at liberty to criticise the artist and his work, and the feeling of reverence becomes gradually weaker. The savage bows before his fetich with a blinder homage than that which Pericles gave to the Jupiter of Phidias.—*Plumptre.*

25. **The workmen of like occupation**—The "craftsmen" of the previous verse represent the higher class of what we call skilled labor. Here we have the unskilled laborers whom they employed. The former were, in a sense, artists; these were artisans. **Sirs**—Literally, *men*, the word used being different from that in chap. 16. 30. **By this craft** [Rev. Ver., *business*] **we have our wealth**—The opening words of Demetrius bring before us, with an almost naïve simplicity, the element of vested interests which has at all times played so prominent a part in the resistance to religious and political reforms, and entered largely into the persecutions against which the early preachers of the Gospel had to contend. Every city had its temples and priests, its flamens, its oracles, or sanctuaries. Sacrifices and feasts created a market for industry which would otherwise have been wanting.—*Plumptre.*

## Authorized Version.

26 Moreover ye see and hear, that not alone at Eph'e-sus, but almost throughout all A'si-a, this Paul hath persuaded and turned away much people, saying that they <sup>1</sup> be no gods which are made with hands:

27 So that not only this our craft is in danger to be set at nought; but also that the temple of the great goddess Di-an'a should be despised, and her magnificence should be destroyed, whom all A'si-a and the world worshippeth.

28 And when they heard *these sayings*, they were full of wrath, and cried out,

\* 1 Chron. 16. 26; Psa. 115. 4; Isa. 41. 24; 44. 16-20; 46. 7; Jer. 10. 3; 16. 20; chap. 17. 29; 1 Cor. 8. 4.

If you meddle with *Diana of the Ephesians* you must expect to lose the friendship of *Demetrius*. Gal. 4. 16.—*Jer. Collier*.

26. At Ephesus—On Ephesus, see notes, Lessons I, II. Throughout all Asia—In the New Testament this word is always limited to Proconsular Asia, the three provinces of Lydia, Caria, and Mysia, with the western part of Phrygia. This Paul—Contemptuously expressed. Persuaded and turned away much people—No one will be astonished at this who reads Pliny's account of the utter neglect into which heathen institutions had fallen half a century after this time in the neighboring province of Bithynia as a direct consequence of Christian teaching, and that though the Christians were a persecuted sect. There, also, complaints come from the priests, the purveyors of the sacrifices, and other people pecuniarily interested. They had the sagacity to see that their peril from Christianity lay in its universality.—*Farrar*. No gods which are made with hands—The wrath of the mob-leader makes him virtually commit himself to the opposite statement that the idol is the God. Philosophers might speak of symbolism and ideal representations, but this was, and always has been, and will be, the conclusion of popular idolatry.—*E. H. Plumptre*.

Plutarch says that the Greeks were "Neither taught nor accustomed to call brazen, sculptured, or stone figures images or honors of the gods, but gods themselves." The converted philosopher, Arnobius, assures us of himself, when a pagan, "If ever I saw a lubricated stone being smeared with olive oil, I addressed it with adulation, as if a present power dwelt within it, and begged the benefactions of the senseless block." After Christianity spread its influence, however, paganism itself grew more reflective and more careful of its language.—*Whedon*.

## Revised Version.

and hear, that not alone at Eph'e-sus, but almost throughout all A'si-a, this Paul hath persuaded and turned away much people, saying that they be no gods, which are made with hands: and not only is there danger that this our trade come into disrepute; but also that the temple of the great goddess <sup>2</sup> Di-an'a be made of no account, and that she should even be deposed from her magnificence, whom all A'si-a and <sup>3</sup> the world worshippeth. And when they heard this, they were filled with wrath, and

<sup>2</sup> Gr. *Artemis*.—<sup>3</sup> Gr. *the inhabited earth*.

27. Our craft [Rev. Ver., *Our trade*] is in danger—The English word conveys, perhaps, too much the idea of art. *Our business*, or *our interests*, would be a somewhat better equivalent. The Greek word is not the same as that so translated in verse 25. To be set at naught [Rev. Ver., *Come into disrepute*.]—Literally, *should come to an exposure*—that is, should become a laughing-stock and a by-word. Panic is sometimes clear-sighted in its provisions, and the coppersmith of Ephesus becomes an unconscious prophet of the future.—*Plumptre*. Temple of the great goddess—On the temple, see Introduction to the lesson. Should be despised—There was great danger, in due time realized, that the *great goddess* would lose her greatness. Whom all Asia and the world—The temple had been built at the common expense of all the Greek cities in Asia, and pilgrims repaired thither from all nations and countries.—*L. Abbott*. The craftsmen are reminded that the prevalence of the Gospel means loss of employment, and starvation for themselves and their families; the zealous idolaters are told that the temple of the great goddess will be despised; and the patriotic citizens are warned that with the decadence of the temple, the supremacy which Ephesus enjoyed among the neighboring provinces will certainly disappear. The prosperity of the city depended on the popularity of the Diana-worship.—*Arnot*.

28. Cried out, saying—*Were crying out*; the imperfect tense indicates continuous action. Probably at first a tumultuous procession marched through the streets of the city swelling their ranks by this war-cry, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians." The mob having been sufficiently aroused, Paul's traveling companions were seized, and a rush was made for the thea-

## Authorized Version.

saying, 'Great is Di-an'a of the E-phe'si-ans.

29 And the whole city was filled with confusion: and having <sup>7</sup> caught Ga'ius

<sup>6</sup> Jer. 50. 38; Hab. 2. 18, 19; Rev. 13. 4.— <sup>7</sup> Rom. 16. 23; 1 Cor. 1. 14.

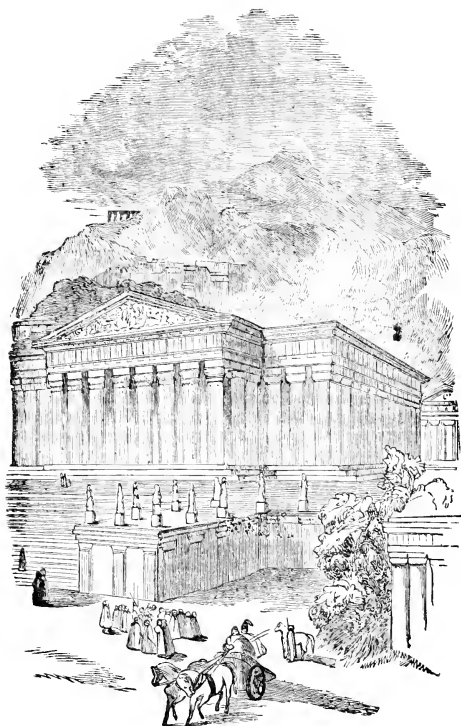
ter, which, in the Greek cities, was used for public gatherings as well as for sports.—*L. Abbott.*

## Revised Version.

cried out, saying, Great is 'Di-an'a of the E-phe'si-ans. And the city was filled with confusion: and they rushed with one accord into the

<sup>4</sup> Gr. *Artemis.*

29. Having caught [Rev. Ver., *seized*] Gaius —Gaius is the Greek form of the Latin Caius, one



The Temple of Diana at Ephesus.

**Great is Diana**—Here is an illustration, one of many, of the utter falsity of the proverb, "The voice of the people is the voice of God." In an age of ignorance and sensuality the voice of the people is far more likely to be the voice of Satan. Majorities do not make the right.

of the most common names among the Romans. This Gaius, otherwise unknown to us, is distinguished by his being a Macedonian from three persons of the same name mentioned in Scripture: first, from Gaius of Derbe, who at a later period joined the apostle, (Acts 20. 4;) second-



## Authorized Version.

\* and Ar-is-tar'chus, men of Mac-e-do'ni-a, Paul's companions in travel, they rushed with one accord into the theatre.

30 And when Paul would have entered in unto the people, the disciples suffered him not.

31 And certain of the chief<sup>o</sup> of A'si-a, which were his friends, sent unto him, desiring *him* that he would not adventure himself into the theatre.

\* Chap. 20. 4; 27. 2; Col. 4. 10; Philem. 21.—<sup>o</sup> 1 Peter 4. 1; Rev. 1. 11.

ly, from Gaius of Corinth, who was among those few persons whom Paul baptized, (1 Cor. 1. 14,) and with whom Paul lodged during his second (third?) visit to Corinth, (Rom. 16. 23;) and, thirdly, from Gaius of Ephesus, to whom, long after this, John wrote his third epistle. 3 John 1. —*Gloag.* And Aristarchus—He seems to have been Paul's faithful attendant from this time until his appearance before Nero. How much earlier he joined Paul we know not, as the mentions of him are incidental.—*Whedon.* Paul's companions—Every-where Paul drew after him, by a peculiar magnetic attraction, men who continued not only his friends, but his companions in journeying, suffering, and danger. Into the theater—Ancient theaters were usually semi-circular in form, and open to the air; the seats were ranged around in tiers one above another, and the performances took place on a stage level with the lowest seats on the straight side of the building. It resembled the modern hippodrome rather than the modern theater.—*L. Abbott.* The theater of Ephesus may still be traced. It is the largest which has yet been discovered, and is said to have been capable of containing fifty-six thousand persons. It was built on the flank of Mount Prion, with rows of seats rising above one another; and was, according to the custom of the ancients, open to the sky. "Of the site of the theater," observes Sir C. Fellows, "the scene of the tumult raised by Demetrius, there can be no doubt, its ruins being a wreck of immense grandeur. I think it must have been larger than the one at Miletus, and that exceeds any I have elsewhere seen in scale, although not in ornament." Its form alone can now be spoken of, for every seat is removed, and the proscenium is a hill of ruins.—*Gloag.*

30. Paul would have entered in [Rev. Ver., *was minded to enter in.*—His zeal seems not void of rashness, but it was the rashness of a hero, vexed to the soul to think that Gaius and

## Revised Version.

theatre, having seized Gaius and Ar-is-tar'chus, men of Mac-e-do'ni-a,

30 Paul's companions in travel. And when Paul was minded to enter in unto the people, the disciples suffered him not. And certain also of the<sup>o</sup> chief officers of A'si-a, being his friends, sent unto him, and besought him not to adventure himself into the theatre. Some therefore

<sup>o</sup> Sir. Asiarchs.

Aristarchus, his two friends, were likely to suffer in his absence.—*J. Milnor.* Unto the people—After they were fairly in the theater, from the business-like character of the place the mob became an *assembly*, (verse 32,) though not a very deliberative one, "for the most part knew not wherefore they had come together."—*D. D. Whedon.* Disciples suffered him not—Paul probably believed that on being admitted into the theater he could so address the assembly as to calm its fury. Such is the spontaneous confidence of great personality endowed with a natural mastery over men. What would have been his success is very doubtful, for the fears of friends, both private and official, prevented the experiment.—*D. D. Whedon.*

There is, perhaps, no courage greater than that which is required from one who, in imminent danger of being torn to pieces, dares to face the furious insults and raging passions of an exasperated crowd. But the powers and the spirit of the apostle always rose to a great occasion, and though he was so sensitive that he could not write a severe letter without floods of tears, and so nervous that he could scarcely endure to be left for even a few days alone, he was quite capable of this act of supreme heroism.—*Farrar.*

31. Certain of the chief of Asia—Better, *Asiarchs*. The title was an official one, applied to the presidents of the games, who were selected from the chief cities of the province. The office was an annual one. They were ten in number, and the proconsul nominated one of them as president.—*Plumptre.* The citizen who had once been Asiarch permanently retained the honorary title, so that these noble friends of Paul may have been only men of Asiarch dignity. It is altogether probable, officials of Artemis as they were, that, like the more elevated minds of the age, they secretly disbelieved the divinity of the goddess; and, if they were not Christians, coincided more with Paul's

## Authorized Version.

32 Some therefore cried one thing, and some another: for the assembly was confused; and the more part knew not wherefore they were come together.

33 And they drew Al-ex-an'der out of the multitude, the Jews putting him forward. And <sup>10</sup>Al-ex-an'der beckoned with the hand, and would have made his defence unto the people.

34 But when they knew that he was a Jew, all with one voice about the space of two hours cried out, Great is Di-an'a of the E-phe'si-ans.

35 And when the town-clerk had

<sup>10</sup> Chap. 12. 17; 1 Tim. 1. 20; 2 Tim. 4. 14.

monotheism than with the superstition of the populace.—*Whedon*. Which were his friends—There is something significant in the fact that the Asiarchs were Paul's friends. The manliness, tact, and courtesy which tempered his zeal and boldness seem always to have gained for him the respect of men in authority: Sergius Paulus, (chap. 13. 7;) Gallio, (chap. 18. 14-17;) Festus and Agrippa, (chaps. 25. 9; 26. 28, 32;) the centurion Julius. Chap. 27. 3, 43.—*E. H. Plumptre*.

32. Cried one thing . . . another—This is a description of a tumultuous meeting taken from life: assembled, they knew not for what purpose; driven about by every gust of passion; drawn together by noise and excitement; and giving vent to their feelings by senseless outcries.—*Gloag*. The assembly—It is not without interest to note that the Greek word for assembly is the *ecclesia*, with which we are so familiar as applied to the Church of Christ.—*Plumptre*. Was confused—The embarrassment of the leaders against Paul was now complete. Could their mob have caught him in the street they could have easily murdered him. Had he entered the theater he might have been summarily dispatched. But as the crowd, unconsciously moving into the theater, has assumed something of a deliberative form, then coolly to propose and debate any measure to make away with him would have brought the Roman government to say something about it. Nothing takes place now but incoherent and contradictory exclamations.—*Whedon*.

33. They drew [Rev. Ver., brought] Alexander . . . the Jews putting him forward—Fearful lest the mob, which is always unreasonable, should direct its fury against them, the Jews put forward one of their number to defend

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cried one thing, and some another: for the assembly was in confusion; and the more part knew not wherefore they were come together. <sup>6</sup>And

they brought Al-ex-an'der out of the multitude, the Jews putting him forward. And Al-ex-an'der beckoned with the hand, and would have made a defence unto the people.

34 But when they perceived that he was a Jew, all with one voice about the space of two hours cried out, Great is <sup>7</sup>Di-an'a of the E-phe'si-

35 ans. And when the townclerk had

<sup>6</sup> Or. And some of the multitude instructed Alexander.—<sup>7</sup> Gr. Artemis.

them, probably to explain that they were not to be confounded with the Christians. It is not improbable that this Alexander is the copper-smith mentioned by Paul in 2 Tim. 4. 14, and was one of the "workmen of like occupation" of verse 25, and hence likely to have considerable influence with his guild.—*L. Abbott*. Beckoned with the hand—Endeavoring to obtain attention, as no voice would be heard in the confusion. As we read how Paul "beckoning with the hand" on a similar occasion (Acts 21. 40) stilled the people to silence, we cannot help thinking that perhaps Paul's desire to speak at this time was founded upon a consciousness of power; and that perhaps, had he spoken, he might have gained the favorable attention of the assembly; and we should have received the record of an address like that at Athens. Would have made his defense—In behalf of himself and his people as against the Christians.

34. They knew [Rev. Ver., They perceived] that he was a Jew.—The Jews were recognized enemies of image worship, and the mob was in no mood to hear from them.—*L. Abbott*. The translation in the Rev. Ver. incidentally shows that in that age, as in the present, the Jews carried in their countenances the lineaments of their race. About the space of two hours—This continuous outcry was probably, in some sort, an act of homage to Diana.—*W. Jacobson*.

35. The town-clerk—The town-clerk was the person who had the care of the archives of the city, and whose duty it was to draw up the official decrees, and to read them in the assemblies of the people. Next to the commander, he was the person of greatest importance in the Greek free cities. His name frequently occurs on coins and inscriptions. The town-clerk here, like the Asiarchs, seems to have been friendly

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appeased the people. he said, *Ye men of Eph'e-sus, what man is there that knoweth not how that the city of the E-ph'e-si-ans is a worshipper of the great goddess Di-an'a, and of the image which fell down from Ju'pi-ter?*

36 Seeing then that these things cannot be spoken against, ye ought to be quiet, and do nothing rashly.

37 For ye have brought hither these men, which are neither robbers of churches, nor yet blasphemers of your goddess.

38 Wherefore if De-me'tri-us, and the

a the temple keeper.

to Paul.—*Gloag.* **Appeased the people**—This magistrate was accustomed, by right of office, to read all public documents in the assemblies of the people. Yielding to habit, the assembly settled down into quietude when this great officer presented himself.—*Arnot.* **He said**—The speech is a pattern of candid argument and judicious tact. He first allays the fanatical passions of his listeners by a simple appeal. Then he bids them remember that Paul and his companions had not been guilty of profaning the temple or of calumnious expressions against the goddess. Then he points out that the remedy for any injustice was amply provided by the assizes, or by an appeal to the præconsul. And, finally, he reminds them that such an uproar exposed them to the displeasure of the Roman government.—*Conghaire and Howson.* **Worshipper** [Rev. Ver., *Temple-keeper*.]—Literally, temple-sweeper, expressing a servile office. But so great a goddess was Artemis that it was a proud prerogative for Ephesus, among the cities of Asia, to be her humble servitor, and wear the title as a badge of honor.—*D. D. Whedon.* **Image which fell down from Jupiter**—Literally, the *Jove-fallen*. Pliny says that there was a wooden image of Artemis at Ephesus which had outlasted seven rebuildings of the temple. The pretense of having fallen from heaven was made in favor of other idols of antiquity, as the Palladium of Troy, the ancile at Rome, and the image of Cybele at Pessinus. The notion may have arisen from the descent of meteoric stones; but in fact this image of Artemis seems to have been of wood. It bore more resemblance to the rude images of Hinduism than to Greek statuary, and was probably a remnant of an old eastern idolatry found by the Greeks when they colonized Ionia.—*Whedon.*

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quieted the multitude, he saith, *Ye men of Eph'e-sus, what man is there who knoweth not how that the city of the E-ph'e-si-ans is temple-keeper of the great 'Di-an'a, and of the image which fell down from 'Ju'pi-ter?* Seeing then that these things cannot be gainsaid, ye ought to be

37 quiet, and to do nothing rash. For ye have brought *hither* these men, which are neither robbers of temples nor blasphemers of our goddess.

38 If therefore De-me'tri-us, and the

\* Gr. Artemis.—' Or, heaven.

36. **These things cannot be spoken against** [Rev. Ver., *gainsaid*.]—The language of the town clerk has the ring of an official acceptance of the established *cultus*, rather than of any strong personal devotion. Such language has often been heard from the defenders of institutions which were almost on the verge of ruin.—*Plumptre.* The real difficulty was that they were not indisputable, and a secret sentiment of doubt angered the people against the men who impugned their religion, and consequently endangered the fame and traffic of their city. Assurance of faith always produces calmness, and religious frenzy is generally a sign of unconscious skepticism.—*L. Abbott.* **Do nothing rashly** [Rev. Ver., *Nothing rash*.]

37. **These men**—Gaius and Aristarchus. **Neither robbers of churches** [Rev. Ver., *temples*.]—Not guilty of sacrilege, they have made no attempt to plunder the temple or altar of Diana. The early preachers of Christianity avoided every thing the least approaching to violence; the only weapon which they employed was persuasion. **Nor yet blasphemers of your** [Rev. Ver., *our*] **goddess**—We may well believe that Paul exercised the utmost prudence and moderation in preaching to the heathen; he did not needlessly hurt their prejudices by invective and offensive language; he reasoned with the people, but did not revile their gods; he did not so much attack error, as establish truth. In his speech to the Athenians we have probably only an instance of the remarkable prudence which pervaded his discourses.—*Gloag.* Chrysostom, however, treats this assertion of the town-clerk merely as a device to appease the people; "This," he says, "was a lie, and was said only for the populace."

38. **If Demetrius**—Thus skillfully throwing

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craftsmen which are with him, have a matter against any man, the <sup>b</sup>law is open, and there are deputies: let them implead one another.

39 But if ye enquire any thing concerning other matters, it shall be determined in a <sup>c</sup>lawful assembly.

40 For we are in danger to be called in question for this day's uproar, there being no cause whereby we may give an account of this concourse.

41 And <sup>11</sup>when he had thus spoken, he dismissed the assembly.

1 And after the uproar was ceased, Paul called unto *him* the disciples, and

<sup>b</sup> Or, the court days are kept.—<sup>c</sup> Or, ordinary.—<sup>11</sup> Prov. 15. 1; Eccles. 9. 17.

the entire responsibility for the tumult and its results upon those who had agitated it. **Have a matter**—Any formal complaint to offer. **The law is open** [Rev. Ver., *The courts are open.*]—Literally, *the court, or forum days are going on.* The words may either indicate that the proconsul was then actually sitting to hold trials in the *agora* or *forum*, or may be taken as a colloquial idiom for "there are court days coming."—*Plumptre*. **There are deputies** [Rev. Ver., *Proconsuls.*]—The *deputies* here are either the proconsuls, or possibly the judges selected by him for the trial of causes, and the language implies that such a *conventus* was now actually in session at Ephesus.—*L. Abbott*. **Let them implead** [Rev. Ver., *accuse*] **one another**—Demetrius and his followers were to lodge a formal statement of the charge they brought against the accused. They in their turn were to put in a rejoinder, and so joining issue, each side would produce its witnesses.—*Plumptre*.

39, 40. **A lawful assembly** [Rev. Ver., *The regular assembly.*]—In Greek cities an assembly of the people was held at regular intervals for the transaction of business. **We are in danger**—The Roman government watched every appearance of insubordination or sedition in the provinces with a jealous eye. . . . It was a capital offense to take any part in a riotous proceeding.—*Hackett*. **An account of this concourse**—There was a risk of which Demetrius and his party had to be reminded, that they might find themselves defendants, and not plaintiffs, in a suit. A riotous "concourse," (the town-clerk uses the most contemptuous word he can find, "this *mob meeting*,") taking the law into its own hands, was not an offense

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craftsmen that are with him, have a matter against any man, <sup>10</sup>the courts are open, and there are proconsuls: 39 Let them accuse one another. But if ye seek any thing about other matters, it shall be settled in the 40 regular assembly. For indeed we are in danger to be <sup>11</sup>accused concerning this day's riot, there being no cause *for it*: and as touching it we shall not be able to give account 41 of this concourse. And when he had thus spoken, he dismissed the assembly.

20 And after the uproar was ceased,

<sup>10</sup> Or, court days are kept.—<sup>11</sup> Or, accused of riot concerning this day.

which the proconsuls were likely to pass over lightly. It would hardly be thought a legitimate excuse that they had got hold of two Jews, and wanted to "lynch" them.—*Plumptre*.

Most people stand in awe of men's judgment more than of the judgment of God. How well were it if we would thus still the tumult of our disorderly appetites and passions, and check the violence of them, with the consideration of the account we must shortly give to the Judge of heaven and earth for all these disorders.—*M. Henry*.

41. **Thus spoken**—Having shown that the popular excitement was discreditable, (vers. 35, 36;) unjustifiable, (ver. 27;) unnecessary, (vers. 28, 29;) and dangerous. Ver. 40.—*W. Jacobson*. **Dismissed the assembly**—There was every motive now to a quiet adjournment of the assembly, for their passionate ardor had passed away with the same suddenness of its arising; they saw the injustice of their rage, and recognized the authors of it, and their own fears began to arise. No one now desired to appear prominent in a riot which might result in his own imprisonment and death.

1. **After the uproar**—Paul waited until the disturbance was at an end, both that he might not seem to be a fugitive and also that he might assure himself of the safety of the Church.—*L. Abbott*. The riot was so far from being the cause of his departure, that it probably delayed it. **Called . . . the disciples**—Gathered the Church founded and built by his care during three years. The character of the epistle which he afterward wrote to it shows that this Church was composed of more intelligent members than many of the early Christian societies. **Em-**

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embraced them,<sup>12</sup> and departed for to go into Mac-e-do'ni-a.

2 And when he had gone over those parts, and had given them much exhortation, he came into Greece.

<sup>12</sup> 1 Cor. 16. 5; 21 or. 7. 5; 1 Tim. 1. 3.

**embraced them** [Rev. Ver., *Took leave of them.*]—Probably a formal farewell service, full of the tenderness which was an element of power in the apostle. **Departed for . . . Macedonia**—On the north-west of the Aegean Sea. We learn from the Second Epistle to the Corinthians that he went to Macedonia by the way of Alexandria Troas, (2 Cor. 2. 12, 13,) sailing in all probability from Ephesus to Troas. In Troas he remained for some time preaching the Gospel; "a door was opened unto him of the Lord." But he did not continue long there; he had expected the arrival of Titus with tidings from the Church of Corinth, but being disappointed in this, and unable to endure longer suspense, he left Troas and crossed over to Macedonia, where he met with Titus. 2 Cor. 7. 5, 6.—*Gloag.*

2. **Gone over those parts**—He would again visit those cities of Macedonia where he had



founded Churches—viz., Philippi, Thessalonica, and Beroea. Six years had elapsed since Paul had first visited Macedonia, and been

beaten with rods in the market-place of Philippi. At this time Paul preached the Gospel in the neighborhood of Illyricum. In the Epistle to the Romans, written a few months later, he says: "From Jerusalem, and round about unto Illyricum, I have fully preached the Gospel of Christ." Rom. 15. 19. By Illyricum is meant the district of country along the shores of the Adriatic to the west of Macedonia.—*Gloag.* This verse covers nine or ten months, from the early summer of A. D. 57 to the spring of 58.—*Howson.* **Came into Greece**—Greece here denotes the Roman province of Achaia, comprehending Greece proper and the Peloponnesus, the capital of which was Corinth. Acts 19. 21.—*Gloag.*

#### Authorities to be Consulted.

Schaff's Apostolic Church, p. 276. Farrar, chap. xxxi. Conybeare and Howson, chap. xvi.

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Paul having sent for the disciples and exhorted them, took leave of them, and departed for to go into 2 Mac-e do'ni-a. And when he had gone through those parts, and had given them much exhortation, he came into Greece.

Stems and Twigs, ii, 46. Freeman's Manners and Customs, 846, 850. Chalmers' Sermons, vol. i. Sermons, by H. W. Beecher, (Series 3,) on Paul and Demetrius; T. DeW. Talmage, (Series 4,) on Christ at the Ballot-Box. Foster's Cyclopedia of Illustrations, ver. 25: 12307; 26: 9736; 27: 4128, 4236, 7896; 28: 8400; 31: 5676; 35: 8632; 36: 1431, 1432, 7949; 35: 10178.

#### Practical Thoughts.

##### [PERSECUTION.]

1. Persecution often has its beginning from men who have interests opposed to the Gospel. Ver. 24.
2. Persecution has generally as its motive the selfishness of the human heart, with which the Gospel interferes. Vers. 25, 27.
3. Persecution is generally inaugurated when some great error is attached, and the truth cannot be overcome in open discussion. Ver. 27.
4. Persecution is often invoked in the name of some popular movement, having a popular utterance as its rallying cry. Ver. 28.
5. Persecution is generally heedless, and vents its anger upon its victims even when innocent. Ver. 29.
6. Persecution is generally ignorant, and often knows not even the causes and objects of its wrath. Ver. 32.
7. Persecution would cease if calm and just minds direct the popular thoughts into right channels. Vers. 35-40.
8. Persecution cannot stop the progress of the Gospel. Vers. 1, 2.

#### Sermon Outline.

Our lesson presents to us the young Church at Ephesus under persecution.

1. *We see that persecution is excited by a growing, aggressive Church.* While the Church is dead there is no opposition from the world. Only a living Church will arouse opposition. When Israel is following Baal the Philistines are quiet; but when the altars of idols are forsaken the world rises in enmity. So, to-day, it is sometimes a sign of prosperity when the rum-sellers, the small politicians, and the evil-doers are angry with the Church.

2. We see that persecution has generally a selfish motive as its inspiring cause. "Our craft is in danger!" said Demetrius. So the opposition to the temperance reform comes from those who have moneyed interests in the rum traffic; the publishers of vicious literature are enraged by the efforts of societies for the suppression of vice, etc.

3. We see that persecution often uses a popular cry as its watchword. "Great is Diana of the Ephesians" was the war-cry then. Start a current of popular feeling and, baseless as it may seem or be, the result may be great, sometimes destructive. The anti-Catholic riots in England, of two centuries ago, the anti-Jewish riots in Europe, of to-day, are instances of this principle.

4. We see that persecution is generally ignorant and unthinking. "The more part knew not where-

fore they were come together." "Kill them all," shouted a cardinal, during the persecution of the Albigenses; "the Lord will know his own."

5. We see that persecution should be met by courage. Notice Paul's conduct: against the advice of his friends he was ready and eager to adventure himself in the theater. When we remember how his words quelled a worse mob in the temple, and won their attention, we are not sure but that Paul's plan was, after all, the best.

6. We see that persecution may sometimes be turned aside by tact. "The town-clerk of Ephesus" showed rare wisdom. If rulers often followed his motto much bloodshed might be spared. Had Napoleon III. taken thought before his quick and careless decision to make war on Germany, his son might now be sitting on the throne of France.

A. D. 57.]

LESSON VIII.

[May 25.

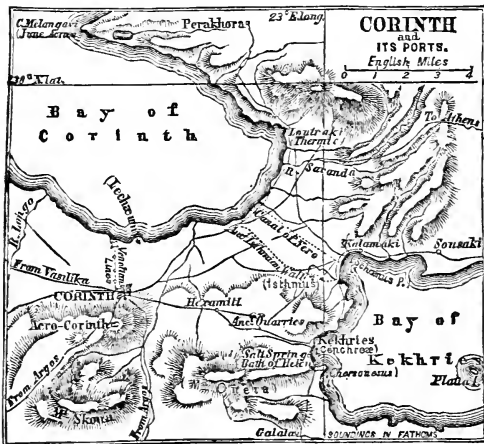
LIBERAL GIVING.—2 Cor. 9. 1-15.

GOLDEN TEXT.—God loveth a cheerful giver.—2 Cor. 9. 7.

TIME.—The summer of A. D. 57.

CONNECTING LINKS.—While Paul was in Macedonia, after leaving Ephesus, he received word from Corinth leading him to write the Second Epistle to the Corinthians.

INTRODUCTION.—The First Epistle had been received with due respect by the most of the Church at Corinth, but there were found some who denied Paul's apostolic authority. He therefore wrote this Sec-



ond Epistle to the Corinthians, which sets forth his work in the Gospel, and gives certain directions concerning the contribution for the Church at Jerusalem. The Second Epistle to the Corinthians.—If the First Epistle to the Corinthians is the most varied and comprehensive of Paul's letters, the Second is the most personal and impassioned. It is not systematic, argumentative, or expository, though full of matter and of force. Its distinctive merit is that, while every-where exalting Christ, it shows us the man Paul of Tarsus, the follower of Christ, as he actually was in labors, anxieties, suspense, and suffering, how

sensitive and emotional, how tender and generous, and yet against false teachers how stern and resolute? It is not at all a treatise or essay constructed on a plan, but a warm outpouring of the apostle's heart. The letter was written in Macedonia, and very likely in the city of Philippi.—*D. Fraser.* *The contribution.*—For some reason the Church at Jerusalem was exceptionally poor. Years ago, (Acts 11. 28.) when a general famine had been foretold, the Christians at Antioch, perhaps at Paul's suggestion, thought of, and resolved to relieve, the foreseen distress at Jerusalem. And at a later date (Gal. 2. 10) Peter urged the same matter on Paul's attention. At the time this epistle was written the same poverty was pressing, and for some time (1 Cor. 16. 1) had been pressing upon the mother Church of Christendom. And Paul resolved to fulfill his promise (Gal. 2. 10) made long ago to Peter. That Paul gave directions (1 Cor. 16. 1) for the collection in Galatia, Macedonia, and Greece, makes it very probable that he did the same at Ephesus, where he was living when he gave these directions, and where he labored so long and so successfully. We may, therefore, infer that he started a united effort throughout the Gentile Churches to relieve the distress at Jerusalem. It was probably the first general effort by men of one nation for the help of another.—*Beet.* There is another view of his contribution and its cause. There is no reason for supposing that the Christians at Jerusalem were poorer than elsewhere, but it was the custom for the Jews of the Dispersion, in the Gentile world, to send financial aid to those in Palestine, partly because there was greater wealth among the Jews abroad, partly to show the spirit of Jewish brotherhood, partly because the Jews in Judea expected it, considering themselves as the purer and truer Jews. It was a sort of "Peter's pence" from the Judaism abroad to that at home. The Christian Churches in Judea were almost entirely composed of Jews who shared largely in the clannish spirit of their people, and considered the Gentile Christians as having scarcely any rights in the Church. The disciples (not the Twelve Apostles) looked with disfavor on the growing Gentile membership, and Paul thought that their regard might be won and their feelings soothed by receiving a general offering of good-will from their Gentile brethren in Christ. Perhaps, too, by their profession of faith in Jesus that had lost the sympathy of their fellow Jews, and their share in the gifts from the Dispersion. But the contribution was more than any thing else a peace-offering to unite the two elements of Christianity. It was after bearing these gifts that Paul was seized in Jerusalem, and there is no mention of any sympathy in his case from the Churches in Judea.

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1 For as touching <sup>1</sup> the ministering to the saints, it is superfluous for me to write to you:

2 For I know <sup>2</sup> the forwardness of your mind, <sup>3</sup> for which I boast of you

<sup>1</sup> Acts 11, 29, Rom. 15. 26; 1 Cor. 16. 1 Gal. 2. 10.—<sup>2</sup> Chap. 8. 19.—<sup>3</sup> Chap. 8. 24.

1. **For**—The connection with the last verse is thus: "I beseech you to receive the brethren whom I send courteously; for, concerning the *duty of ministration to the saints*, it is surely superfluous for me to write to you who are so prompt already." No new subject begins, as some have supposed, nor is there any break in the sense at all.—*Alford.* The persons sent were Titus, and probably Luke, the unnamed brother "whose praise is in all the Churches." Some think that Erastus was also included. **The ministering to the saints**—There is a double reference here to the reception of the brothers already named, and their ministering to their needs; and also to the general contribution which Paul had initiated for the benefit of the Church in Jerusalem, concerning which see the Introduction. **Superfluous**, etc., (comp. 1 Thess. 4. 9) reveals the apostle's usual courtesy and tact.—*Beet.* The apostle chooses such general terms as a mild reproof to the Corinthians, who,

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9 For as touching the ministering to the saints, it is superfluous for me to write to you: for I know your readiness, of which I glory on your behalf to them of Mac-e-do'ni-a, that A-cha'i-a

well aware as they were of the duty of ministering to the saints, were yet somewhat remiss in this particular example of the duty.—*Alford.*

2. **For I know**—Probably Paul here means that he had had opportunity before of witnessing their readiness to do good, and that he had learned in particular of Titus that they had formed the plan to aid in this contribution.—*Barnes.* **The forwardness of your mind** [Rev. Ver., *Your readiness*.]—Paul's continued boasting about the Corinthians implies that in the previous year, when the matter of the collection was first brought before them, they took it up eagerly, and were prepared to contribute at once, and actually began (chap. 8. 10) to contribute. Even the liberality of the Macedonians, for which Paul is so thankful to God, was in great part a result of the example thus nobly set by the Corinthians.—*Beet.* **For which I boast** [Rev. Ver., *I glory*.]—*I am in the habit of boasting concerning you to Macedonians.* Bengel re-

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to them of Mac-e-do'ni-a, <sup>4</sup> that A-cha'i-a was ready a year ago; and your zeal hath provoked very many.

3 Yet <sup>5</sup> have I sent the brethren, lest our boasting of you should be in vain in this behalf; that, as I said, ye may be ready.

4 Lest haply if they of Mac-e-do'ni-a come with me, and find you unprepared, we (that we say not, ye) should be ashamed in this same confident boasting.

5 Therefore I thought it necessary

<sup>4</sup> Chap. 8. 10.—<sup>5</sup> Chap. 8. 5, 17.

marks on the present tense that Paul was therefore still in Macedonia. **Macedonia**—The province north of Achaia or Greece, having for its principal cities Philippi and Thessalonica. **Achaia**—The Grecian province of which Corinth was the capital, sometimes including all Southern Greece. **Was ready a year ago** [Rev. Ver., *Hath been prepared for a year past.*]—*Hath been ready*, namely, to send off the money; and that, consequently, nothing remained but for authorized persons to come and collect it. The apostle, judging by their readiness, had made this boast concerning them, supposing it was really so.—*Alford*. **Your zeal**—The zeal which proceeds from you, which has its source in you, and whose influence goes forth from you.—*Alford*. **Hath provoked very many** [Rev. Ver., *Hath stirred up very many of them.*]—The apostle arouses each by the example of the other. Poor Macedonia was worthy in her heart of benevolence, (chap. 8. 1-4,) and richer Achaia was inspiring her with her early leadership.—*Whedon*.

3. **The brethren**—The three *brethren*, Titus, Luke, and Erastus. Grotius quotes from Maimonides the statement that the Jews were accustomed to place three commissioners over any movement of contribution.—*Whedon*. **Our boasting . . . should be in vain** [Rev. Ver., *Our glorying . . . be made void.*]—He had judged from their early enthusiasm that the Corinthians would be ready, and, in the warmth of his own regard for them, had so declared to the Macedonian disciples. But it was the opinion of Paul as a man, and not the inspired utterance of an apostle. And now that disorders and divisions had arisen at Corinth, he was afraid lest his hopes would be disappointed by the failure of the Church to verify its promises of a year before. **In this behalf** [Rev. Ver., *In this respect.*]—This implies that Paul's exultation

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hath been prepared for a year past; and <sup>1</sup> your zeal hath stirred up <sup>2</sup> very

3 many of them. But I have sent the brethren, that our glorying on your behalf may not be made void in this respect; that, even as I said, ye may <sup>4</sup> be prepared: lest by any means, if there come with me any of Mac-e-do'ni-a, and find you unprepared, we (that we say not, ye) should be put to

<sup>5</sup> shame in this confidence. I thought

<sup>1</sup> Or, emulation of you.—<sup>2</sup> Or, the more part.

about them embraced other points. He feared lest in this detail his boast might prove to be misplaced.—*Deet*. **Ye may be ready**—He sent the brethren, whose very presence among them would reprove their neglect and spur them to diligence. Thus there is in this, as Estius says, "a sharp exhortation of the apostle combined with tacit praise."

4. **If they of Macedonia come with me**—Paul had sent the brethren in advance of his own coming. But he is himself on his way southward from Macedonia to Corinth, and with him will come certain members of the Church in that province, either as his companions in travel, or, more likely, as the bearers of their Church's contribution. It would never answer to meet them with their own gifts uncollected. **We, that we say not ye**—Paul speaks of his own shame, that he may avoid speaking of the greater shame which, if found, *unprepared*, would fall upon them.—*Deet*. In this one cannot but recognize a most refined and delicate turn, inferior to none of the best classical writers.—*Bloomfield*. **Should be ashamed**—Paul would be brought to shame after all his "boastings" in the liberality of his beloved Corinthians, brought to shame in the very presence of the Philippians whom he had incited by pointing to their example. And he will not say how ashamed they would feel to find their honor turned to contempt in the other Churches.

Appeal to the highest motives; appeal whether they be there or no, for you make them where you do not find them. Arnold at Rugby trusted his boys, avowing that he believed what they affirmed, and all attempt at deceiving him ceased forthwith.—*F. W. Robertson*.

5. **I thought it necessary**—In view of the possible backwardness of the Corinthian contribution, a backwardness which Paul only hints at as a possibility, not as a fact, and to which



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to exhort the brethren, that they would go before unto you, and make up beforehand <sup>a</sup> your bounty, <sup>b</sup> whereof ye had noticed before, that the same might be ready, as a matter of bounty, and not as of covetousness.

6 But <sup>c</sup> this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully.

7 Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; <sup>d</sup> not grudgingly, or of necessity: for <sup>e</sup> God loveth a cheerful giver.

<sup>a</sup> Blessing. Gen. 33. 11.—<sup>b</sup> Or, which hath been so much spoken of before.—<sup>c</sup> Prov. 11. 24; 19. 17; 22. 9; Gal. 6. 7, 9.—<sup>d</sup> Deut. 15. 7.—<sup>e</sup> Exod. 25. 2; 35. 5; Rom. 12. 8; chap. 8. 12.

he refers in an apologetic tone. To exhort [Rev. Ver., *intreat*] the brethren—Words indicating an earnest request. He had urged, may *intreated*, these three brethren who were to go in advance of his own party to hurry forward the contribution, and thus spare his own feelings when he should arrive. Your bounty [Rev. Ver., *Your aforepromised bounty.*]—Implying that his glorying on their behalf was founded upon their promise to him during his visit. Your bounty—*Bounty*, literally, *blessing*; not used only for a blessing in words, but of one expressed by a *present*, as Gen. 33. 11; Judg. 1. 15. This sense of *blessing*, combined with the primitive sense, affords the apostle an opportunity for bringing out the true spirit in which Christian gifts should be given. *Afford.* As a matter of bounty—As the fruit of blessing, poured out from a beneficent mind, not of a sparing, covetous spirit which gives no more than it need. And not as of covetousness [Rev. Ver., *of extortion.*]—And not like a sort of extortion, wrung from you by mere dint of importunity.—*Doddridge.*

6. And this—Directs attention to a new and important point, viz., that acts of kindness to God's people are seeds sown into the ground which, by the outworking of the laws of life, produce similar and multiplied results. So Gal. 6. 7; 1 Cor. 9. 11; James 3. 18; Prov. 22. 8.—*Beet.* Soweth sparingly—By giving little in proportion to his ability. There may be a small gift which yet is bountiful, for the measure of liberality is not in the amount given, but in that remaining after the gift. Reap also sparingly—Since gifts are seeds, he that holds himself back from giving thereby holds himself back from the harvest.—*Beet.* Soweth boun-

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it necessary therefore to intreat the brethren, that they would go before unto you, and make up beforehand your aforepromised <sup>3</sup> bounty, that the same might be ready, as a matter of bounty, and not of <sup>4</sup> extortion.

6 But this I say, He that soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he that soweth <sup>5</sup> bountifully shall reap

7 also <sup>6</sup> bountifully. Let each man do according as he hath purposed in his heart; not <sup>7</sup> grudgingly, or of necessity; 8 for God loveth a cheerful giver. And

<sup>3</sup> Gr. *Blessing*.—<sup>4</sup> Gr. *covetousness*.—<sup>5</sup> Gr. *with blessings*.—<sup>6</sup> Gr. *with blessings*.—<sup>7</sup> Gr. *of sorrow*.

tifully—Literally, "soweth with blessings," [as in the margin of the Rev. Ver.] This refers to the *spirit* of the giver, who must be "a cheerful giver," not giving murmuringly, but *with blessings*, with a beneficent, charitable spirit, such a one shall reap also with blessings, abundant and unspeakable.—*Afford.* Reap also bountifully—Giving blessings, he shall receive blessings, in the gifts of God; in the consciousness of aiding the cause of Christ; in the hope of an everlasting reward.

7. As he purposeth in his heart—Whatever be the amount, it must be an outflow of *each one's* own previous resolve. The choice must be *in his heart*, the inmost center of the man, where, standing alone, he chooses his own action.—*Beet.* Christian charity is a calm, wise thing, nay, sometimes it will appear to a superficial observer a very hard thing, for it has courage to refuse. A Christian man will not give to every thing; he will not give because it is the fashion; he will not give because an appeal is very impassioned, or because it touches his sensibilities. He gives as he "*purposeth* in his heart."—*F. W. Robertson.* So let him give [Rev. Ver., *do.*] Not grudgingly—Literally, *not from grief*, as if half crying over the loss of the money given.—*Wardon.* Necessity—From the wringing out of some urgent pleader, or under compulsion of some unavoidable obligation. God loveth a cheerful giver—Because the only service which God accepts is that of the heart, free and unconstrained. The gift by compulsion is not that of the will of the giver, and God receives only that which is the giver's own. Other gifts may benefit the receiver, this only blesses the bestower.

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8 And <sup>9</sup> God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work:

9 (As it is written, <sup>10</sup> He hath dispersed abroad; he hath given to the poor: his righteousness remaineth for ever.

10 Now he that <sup>11</sup> ministereth seed to the sower, both minister bread for your food, and multiply your seed sown, and increase the fruits of <sup>12</sup> your righteousness;)

11 Being enriched in every thing to

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God is able to make all grace abound unto you; that ye, having always all sufficiency in everything, may abound

9 unto every good work: as it is written.

He hath scattered abroad, he hath given to the poor;

His righteousness abideth for ever.

10 And he that supplieth seed to the sower and bread for food, shall supply and multiply your seed for sowing, and increase the fruits of your

11 righteousness: ye being enriched in

<sup>9</sup> Prov. 28, 27; Phil. 4, 11.—<sup>10</sup> Psa. 112, 9.—<sup>11</sup> Isa. 55, 10.—  
<sup>12</sup> Hos. 10, 12; Matt. 6, 1.

8. **God is able**—To him who dreads that giving will impoverish him, Paul speaks a word of faith in God.—*Whedon*. God is able to pour out upon you abundantly in undeserved favor every good thing in order that thus in every point, and at all times, having every need supplied, and being conscious of this, you may have a surplus for every kind of beneficence.—*Beet*. **All grace**—Even in outward good things—to which here the reference is; not including, however, the wider meaning of *all grace*.—*Alford*. **Sufficiency**—So as not to need the help of others, having yourselves from God “bread for your food.”—*D. Brown*. Do not suppose that by giving liberally you will be impoverished and reduced to want. You should rather confide in God, who is able to furnish you abundantly with what is needful for the supply of your necessities.—*Barnes*. **May abound**—They who know that God will supply all their need, and they only, are independent of the uncertainties of life. They can, therefore, afford to give away money to others.—*Beet*.

9. **As it is written**—Quotation, word for word, of Psa. 112, 9, according with, and thus supporting, the foregoing exposition of God's purpose.—*Beet*. **Dispersed**—As seed sown with full and open hand, without anxious thought in what direction each grain may fall. It is implied, also, that he has always what he may disperse. **The poor**—The Greek word is here found in New Testament meaning “one in straitened circumstances who earns his bread by labor.” The word usually employed elsewhere means “one so poor as to live by begging.”—*D. Brown*. **His righteousness**—In what sense is *righteousness* used? Clearly in the only one warranted by the context—that of

“goodness proved by beneficence”—a righteous deed which shall not be forgotten—as a sign of righteousness in character and conduct.—*Alford*. But even this *righteousness* is by faith, for it is an outworking of faith and of the Holy Spirit given to believers.—*Beet*.

10. **Now he that ministereth**—An implication that as its primary source their gifts came from God, who supplied them with the means of making the offering; so that after all it was God's gift to his own cause. **Minister bread**—The Rev. Ver., by inserting the word *shall*, changes this from a prayer of Paul in behalf of the Corinthians to a direct promise.—Rev. Ver., *He that supplieth seed . . . shall supply and multiply your seed for sowing*. **Bread for your food**—The supply of your own necessities. God will supply the needs of those who give to the needs of his own. **Multiply your seed**—That is, the money for you to bestow, answering to the word “seed to be sown.”—*Alford*. **The fruits of your righteousness**—The heavenly rewards for your Christian charity. Matt. 10, 42. Righteousness shall be itself the reward, even as it is the thing rewarded.—*D. Brown*. It suggests that in giving their money they were only doing what is right, (comp. Rom. 15, 27,) and were doing what God will reward.—*Beet*.

11. **Being enriched**—The design of the apostle is to state to them the true reason why wealth was bestowed. It was not for the purposes of luxury and self-gratification, not to be spent in sensual enjoyment, not for parade and display; it was that it might be distributed to others in such a way as to cause thanksgiving to God.—*Barnes*. **Unto all liberality**—That is, in order that you may show all liberality.—*Alford*. The word in the original means “singleness or sincerity.” **Causeth** [Rev. Ver., *work-*

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all <sup>12</sup> bountifulness, <sup>13</sup> which canseth through us thanksgiving to God.

12 For the administration of this service not only supplieth the want of the saints, but is abundant also by many thanksgivings unto God;

13 Whiles by the experiment of this ministration they <sup>14</sup> glorify God for your professed subjection unto the gospel of Christ, and for *your* liberal distribution <sup>15</sup> unto them, and unto all men;

14 And by their prayer for you,

*c* simplicity, or, liberality.—<sup>12</sup> Chap. 4. 15.—<sup>14</sup> Matt. 5. 16.  
—<sup>15</sup> Heb. 13. 16.

*eth*] through us—Namely, Paul and his colleagues who suggested and carried out this contribution. Paul added these words remembering that of the praise evoked by the collection he was an instrument.—*Bet.* Brings about by our means (as the distributors of it) thanksgiving (from those who will receive it) to God.—*Alford.* He calls their attention to the gratitude to God which will follow the reception of their gifts as a motive to their liberal giving. Their generosity at Corinth will cause praises to sound forth in Jerusalem.

12. The administration [Rev. Ver., *ministration*] of this service—The word translated *service* is a peculiar one; that from which the word *liturgy* is derived. According to Alford, “the proper sense of the word used is, serving the public by furnishing the means of outfit for some necessary purpose.” In the New Testament it always refers to the services of religion, and its use here, says Doddridge, intimates that this was to be regarded not merely as an act of *humanity*, but *religion*. In other words, giving is a part of worship. Not only—Literally, *Not only is filling in the deficiencies of the saints, but is causing to abound thanksgiving, through many, to God.*—*Whedon.* Supplieth the wants of the saints—The apostle here brings forward another motive for their cheerful contributions in the material and moral benefits which the saints at Jerusalem would derive from it.—*Neander.* Is abundant—Will abound toward God in producing thanksgivings; a repetition for emphasis of the thought at the close of the previous verse.

13. By the experiment of this ministration [Rev. Ver., *Through the proving of you by this ministration.*] By means of the proof that

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everything unto all <sup>12</sup> liberality, which worketh through us thanksgiving to God. For the ministration of this service not only filleth up the measure of the wants of the saints, but aboundeth also through many thanksgivings unto God; seeing that through the proving of you by this ministration they glorify God for the obedience of your confession unto the gospel of Christ, and for the <sup>13</sup> liberality of your contribution 14 unto them and unto all; while they themselves also, with supplication on

<sup>12</sup> *Gr. singleness.*—<sup>13</sup> *Gr. singleness.*

your Christian profession is genuine, proof afforded by *this ministration*, the Christians in Judea are glorifying God. In their eyes God was magnified through the proved sincerity of the Gentile Christians.—*Bet.* They glorify God for your professed subjection [Rev. Ver., *for the obedience of your confession.*]—Ye yield yourselves in willing subjection to the Gospel precepts, evinced in acts as well as in profession.—*D. Brown.* This collection was a conspicuous act of submission to the apostolic authority which enjoined it and to Christ, (chap. 8. 5,) for whose glory it was made, by those who professed to be his servants.—*Bet.* There was a real and sincere submission to the Gospel of Christ, and that was manifested by their giving liberally to supply the wants of others. The doctrine is, that one evidence of true subjection to the Gospel, one proof that our profession is sincere and genuine, is a willingness to contribute to relieve the wants of the poor and afflicted friends of the Redeemer.—*Barnes.* Unto all men—They give glory to God, not only for this token of the fullness of your consecration to Christ and your obedience to the Gospel but also for it as a proof of the common fellowship which you have with them and with all Christians; and an interest in the needs of others which this generous gift shows.

14. And by their prayer—This verse is probably to be taken in connection with ver. 12, and ver. 13 is a parenthesis. Thus interpreted the sense will be, The administration of this service (ver. 12) will produce abundant thanks to God. It will also (ver. 14) produce another effect. It will tend to excite the prayers of the saints for you, and thus produce important benefits to yourself. They will earnestly desire

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which long after you for the exceeding grace of God in you.

15 Thanks be unto God <sup>16</sup> for his unspeakable gift.

<sup>16</sup> Jas. 1. 17.

your welfare, they will anxiously pray to be united in Christian friendship with those who have been so signally endowed with the grace of God.—*Barnes*. **Long for you**—The Jewish Christians wonder at the undeserved favor of God which had wrought in the Gentiles such submission and brotherhood and sincerity. Thus they glorified God. They longed to see those in whom he had worked such blessings, and returned their kindness by prayer for them.—*Beet*. **Grace of God in you**—Grace, of which the gift was an evidence.

The prayers of the poorest Christian for us are worth more than all we usually bestow on them in charity; and he who has secured the pleadings of a child of God, however humble, in his behalf, has made a good use of his money.—*Barnes*.

**15. Thanks be unto God**—The idea is, Your benefactions are indeed valuable, and for them, for the disposition which you have manifested, and for all the good which you will be enabled thus to accomplish, we are bound to give thanks to God. All this will excite the gratitude of those who shall be benefited. But how small is all this compared with the great gift which God has imparted in bestowing a Saviour!—*Barnes*. If we have received from God "his unspeakable gift," what great thing is it if we give a few perishing gifts for his sake.—*D. Brown*. **His unspeakable gift**—His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. It is impossible to apply such a term so emphatically placed as here to any gift short of *that one*.—*Alford*. It is so because, (a) of his own greatness and glory; (b) because of the inexpressible love which he evinced; (c) because of the unutterable sufferings which he endured; (d) because of the inexpressibly great benefits which result from his work. No language can do justice to this work in either of these respects; no heart in this world fully conceives the obligation which rests upon man in virtue of his work.—*Barnes*.

## Authorities to be Consulted.

See in the commentaries the introduction to 2 Cor. Schaff's *Apostolic Church*, p. 292. Farrar, chap. xxxiii. Conybeare and Howson, chap. xvii. F. W. Robertson's *Lectures on Corinth*—156

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your behalf, long after you by reason of the exceeding grace of God in you.

15 Thanks be to God for his unspeakable gift.

*ians*. Arthur's *Tongue of Fire*, p. 50. *Sunday Magazine*, (1866,) 677. *Pulpit Analyst*, v, 464. *Sermons*, by G. W. Bethune, on *The Strength of Christian Charity*; W. Arnot, (*in Roots and Fruits*,) on *Seed to the Sower*; E. Payson, on *God's Best Gift to Man*. *Foster's Cyclopaedia of Illustrations*, [numbers marked with a star refer to poetical illustrations,] ver. 5: 8974; 6: 591, 8013, 8971; 7: 2462, 8966; 8: 5121, 9174; 9: 4487; 10: 8774; 11: \*1469, 3472; 12: \*338, 1997; 13: \*339, 7048; 15: 327, 7139.

## Practical Thoughts.

[CHRISTIAN GIVING.]

1. The Christian should give to the needs of his fellow Christians, needing no exhortation or command thereto. Ver. 1.
2. The Christian should give by principle, not from a spasm of zeal under the influence of earnest appeals. Ver. 2.
3. The Christian should give regularly, and of his own accord, not requiring pressure from without to induce him to do his duty. Vers. 3, 4.
4. The Christian should give freely, as a matter of bounty, not an unwilling surrender of that which he would fain withhold. Ver. 5.
5. The Christian should give bountifully, as God gives to him to possess. Ver. 6.
6. The Christian should give by his own free choice on thoughtful decision as to his duty and ability. Ver. 7.
7. The Christian should give cheerfully and gladly as a privilege. Ver. 7.
8. The Christian should ever keep in mind God's unspeakable gift, his own Son. Ver. 15.

## Sermon Outline.

BY REV. J. S. CHADWICK, D.D.

The impoverished condition of the Church at Jerusalem, deeply affected the Apostle Paul, and called forth his earnest appeal to brethren in other places for immediate help. The Christians of Corinth had promised assistance, on the strength of which Paul boasted of their readiness to the Macedonians, and had thereby inflamed the zeal of the latter, who, though themselves very poor, had given liberally toward the need of the suffering saints in Judea. For some reason the collection from the Church at

Corinth had been delayed. The people were more able to contribute than the Macedonians. Paul reminds them of their promise and asks them to measure up to the expectation, which had been excited by his report of their generosity. He entreated them not to disappoint his hopes concerning them. Now was the time to have the sincerity of their love tested and proved.

**I. Christians are sometimes placed in conditions of great trial and privation.**

The converts at Jerusalem were persecuted, impoverished, and reduced to great distress. Relief was providentially provided. Christians may now suffer afflictions, privations, distress, and even persecutions. God will still be their refuge.

**II. The solicitude and zeal of the Apostle Paul, manifested in behalf of suffering saints, are traits of Christian character worthy of admiration and imitation by all who claim to be believers in the Lord Jesus Christ.**

**III. The duty of Christian liberality should be recognized and fully understood.**

1. *It is the spirit of the Gospel.* It is earnestly insisted upon, described, and commended throughout the New Testament. Benevolence is a marked grace of the Holy Spirit. To believe in the Lord Jesus Christ is to accept the obligations which such faith imposes.

2. *It is based on the high claims of Christian goodness.* More is justly expected of Christians than of others. Other good qualities should not stand as an excuse, nor be offered as an apology, for not being liberal.

3. *It grows out of the sympathies of our common humanity.* God has planted kindness and compassion in our hearts. Gentile Churches must give to the necessities of Jewish converts. Without help, pity is fiction and sympathy worthless.

4. *It is a remedy against covetousness and a safeguard from extravagance.* One of the greatest of the age is the greed for gain. It must be met by the grace of liberality. The Lord's money

will not be squandered if true benevolence is cultivated.

**IV. The principles inculcated concerning Christian giving should be faithfully observed.**

1. *Give from pure motives and in a right spirit,* without selfish expectations. Let the deed be good, and the spirit that prompted it right.

2. *Give with discrimination.* Not every call is a rightful claim. Give not through mere impulse, else your gifts may produce improvidence. Get all the light possible. Let giving be more of a habit than a spasmodic emotion.

3. *Give liberally.* What is generous to one may be niggardly for another. Paul treats of liberality as a cardinal element of true piety, and also provides for its culture, as an essential exercise of regenerated life.

4. *Give cheerfully.* Not because others give, nor from constraint, but gladly. Such givers are near the heart of God.

**V. Blessings will surely follow liberal giving.**

1. *To the giver.* Divine recognition; heart enlarged; selfishness doomed; Christ-like spirit developed; inward satisfaction and increased happiness experienced.

2. *To the beneficiaries.* Wants realized; confirmed in the faith of the Gospel; prejudices removed; praise to God evoked; and prayers for benefactors offered.

3. *Upon other Christians.* Their zeal inflamed; liberality enlarged; and opportunities searched out for the display of the grace of giving.

**DEDUCTIONS.**

1. Opportunities for doing good and giving much abound.

2. God is honored by every act of true liberality.

3. He gives us all that we have; let us wisely distribute.

4. Study the life, imitate the example, and manifest the spirit of Him who "went about doing good." Even the cup of cold water given in **his** name shall have its reward.

**CHRISTIAN LIBERTY.—Gal. 4. 1-16.**

**GOLDEN TEXT.—Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free.—**

**GAL. 5. 1.**

**TIME.—A. D. 57, probably at the close of the year.**

**CONNECTING LINKS—**While Paul was in Greece (end of Lesson VII) he received word of the condition of the Churches in Galatia, in central Asia Minor, leading him to write this epistle.

**INTRODUCTION. The Churches of Galatia.**—The first syllable of the word Galatians is identical with Gaul, an old name of France; and, indeed, with Gallic, Gaelic, Welsh, (old Gaullic and Wallic,) as well as with Celtic. It is the name of that great, brilliant, and brave, but fickle, race, which, once occupying Central Europe, was driven westward by the great Germanic tide pouring in from Asia; and which, gradually receding from the face of its invaders toward the Atlantic, now remain upon the western margin of Europe, as the French, Welsh, Scotch, and Irish peoples. The Epistle to the Galatians was, there-

fore, an epistle to the Celts. The Galatian tribe of this epistle, impelled by the revolutions of war in the early ages, was settled in Asia Minor, like a lonely bowlder, amid surrounding tribes of Phrygian aborigines. As late as the time of Jerome, (fourth century A. D.,) an Asiatic *Galatian* and a European *Celt* could have understood each other's language. These Galatians were a victorious people in their Asiatic region until the year 125 B. C., when they were subjected by the Roman power, yet allowed to retain their previous form of government; and 25 years B. C. they were completely reduced to the condition of a Roman province. The old Phrygian pagans here were worshipers of Cybele, and their priests practiced rites severer than circumcision. There was also a large population of Jews who engaged in trade and acquired wealth and influence. The Jews were in favor with the Roman government, and not only made many proselytes, but infused a mitigating influence into surrounding paganism. Over all this mixture of populations the Romans, few, yet predominant, held sway, and the Greek language was the prevalent medium of intercourse. But incidental accounts remain of Paul's first preaching and founding Churches in Galatia. His first visit, in his second missionary tour, is slightly mentioned in Acts 16. 6; and his second, in his third tour, is mentioned as slightly in Acts 18. 23. Yet the Galatian Churches must have been founded at the first, and "confirmed" at the second, of these two visits. The story of the Judaizing troublers who came to Gentile Antioch, as from James of Jerusalem, proclaiming salvation by circumcision, was repeated in Gentile Galatia. These Celts came under the power of this Jewish influence. Leading Christian Judaists came from Jerusalem armed with metropolitan authority to tell these Galatian Churches that their founder-apostle was a spurious apostle, and their Christianity a defective Christianity which would not save them. The severe rite of circumcision was a condition to salvation, and adherence to Jerusalem and a gorgeous ritual were necessary to a complete Church. Paul's naked doctrine of justification before God solely by faith in Christ was a doctrine of apostasy. Under these powerful influences the impressible Galatian Churches were yielding and ready to fall. Unable to go himself from distant Corinth Paul sent this letter to their rescue.—*Whedon*.

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1 Now I say, *That* the heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all;

2 But is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the father.

3 Even so we, when we were children,

1. **The heir as long as he is a child** [Rev. Ver., *So long as the heir is a child.*].—The Jews claimed that they were the children or the sons of God, a title which the apostle would not withhold from the pious part of the nation, but it was a condition in which they had not entered on the full inheritance, and which was far inferior to that of those who had embraced the Messiah, and who were admitted to the full privileges of sonship. They were indeed heirs. They were interested in the promises. But still they were in a condition of comparative servitude, and could be made free only by the Gospel.—*Barnes*. **A child**—Literally, *an infant*; but the word is intended to cover the whole period of minority, which by Roman law terminated at twenty-five.—*Whedon*. **Differeth nothing from a servant** [Rev. Ver., *a bondservant*].—The minor was legally in much the same position as the slave. He could perform no act except through his legal representative. This responsible person, the guardian in the case of the minor, the master in case of the slave, who represents him to the state—was termed in Attic law "lord."—*Lightfoot*. **Though he be lord of all**—Has the right thereto; nay, if the father

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1 But I say that so long as the heir is a child, he differeth nothing from a bondservant, though he is lord of all; 2 but is under guardians and stewards until the term appointed of the father. 3 So we also, when we were children,

is dead, he is actual possessor, only he cannot enjoy it, cannot assert his character as master, so long as he is under guardians.—*Schmoller*. So the child of God, a servant in exterior, is interior heir of God, and lord of all the blessedness of eternity.—*Whedon*.

2. **Under tutors and governors** [Rev. Ver., *Guardians and stewards*]. **Governors**—This word means a house-manager, an overseer, a steward. It properly refers to one who had authority over the slaves or servants of a family to assign them their tasks and portions.—*Barnes*. **Until the time** [Rev. Ver., *term*] **appointed**—The supposition in our text is that a father (from what reason or under what circumstances matters not) has preordained a time for his son and heir to come of age, and till that time has subjected him to guardians and stewards.—*Alford*.

When the Prince of Wales once in his childhood refused obedience to his governess, appealing to his dignity as heir to the throne, Prince Albert brought the Bible, read him this passage, and chastised him.—*Starke*.

3. **Even so we**—We who were Jews—for so I think the word here to be limited, and not extended to the heathen.—*Barnes*. **When**

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were <sup>1</sup>in bondage under the <sup>2</sup>elements of the world:

4 But <sup>2</sup>when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of <sup>3</sup>a woman, <sup>4</sup>made under the law,

5 To <sup>5</sup>redeem them that were under the law, <sup>6</sup>that we might receive the adoption of sons.

<sup>1</sup> Col. 2. 8; Heb. 9. 10.—<sup>2</sup> Or, rudiments.—<sup>3</sup> Gen. 49. 10; Dan. 9. 24; Mark 1. 15; Eph. 1. 10.—<sup>4</sup> Gen. 3. 15; John 1. 14; Heb. 2. 14.—<sup>5</sup> Matt. 5. 17.—<sup>6</sup> Matt. 20. 28; 1 Pet. 1. 18.—<sup>\*</sup> John 1. 12.

**we were children**—The pre-Christian state is regarded as a childhood in relation to the Christian state of the same persons, only the Christian state then is regarded as ripe age.—*Schmoller*. **Were in bondage**—The Jews in their bondage to the law of Moses, as the representative people of the world, include all mankind virtually amenable to God's law.—*D. Brown*. **Under the elements of the world**—It denotes the elements or rudiments of any kind of instruction, and in the New Testament is applied to the first lessons or principles of religion.—*Barnes*. The best interpretation seems to be as in Col. 2. 8, 20, the *elementary lessons of outward things*. Of this kind were all the enactments peculiar to the law, some of which are expressly named. Ver. 10.—*Alford*. **Of the world**—Paul calls them the rudiments of the world, which, not being renewed by the Spirit, only perform worldly things.—*Luther*. It is not that they were in themselves evil—for that is not true; it is not that they were adapted to foster a worldly spirit—for that is not true; it is not that they had their origin from this world—for that is not true; nor is it from the fact that they resembled the institutions of the heathen world—for that is as little true; but it is that, like the things of the world, they were transient, temporary, and of little value.—*Barnes*.

4. **The fullness of the time**—It was "the fullness of time." *First*, in reference to the *giver*. The moment had arrived which God had ordained from the beginning and foretold by his prophets for Messiah's coming. This is implied in the comparison, "the time appointed by the Father." *Secondly*, in reference to the *recipient*. The Gospel was withheld until the world had arrived at mature age; law had worked out its educational purpose, and now was superseded.—*Lightfoot*. **God sent forth**—The expression implies a special interposition of God in his birth as man, namely, causing him to be conceived by the Holy Ghost. **His Son**—Emphatical. "*His own Son*." Not by adoption,

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were held in bondage under the

4 rudiments of the world: but when the fulness of the time came, God sent forth his Son, born of a woman, 5 born under the law, that he might redeem them which were under the law, that we might receive the adop-

<sup>1</sup> Or, elements.

as we are, (verse 5;) nor merely his Son by the anointing of the Spirit which God sends into the heart. Verse 6; John 1. 18.—*D. Brown*. This implies that the Son of God had an existence before his incarnation. See John 16. 28. The Saviour is often represented as *sent* into the world, and as *coming forth* from God.—*Barnes*. **Made** [Rev. Ver., *born*] **of a woman**—This also implies that he had another nature than that which was derived from the woman. On the supposition that he was a mere man, how unmeaning would this assertion be!—*Barnes*. **Made** [Rev. Ver., *born*] **under the law**—"Made" by his Father's appointment and his own free will, "subject to the law" to keep it all, ceremonial and moral, perfectly for us as the Representative Man, and to suffer and exhaust the full penalty of our whole race's violation of it.—*D. Brown*. A Gentile could not (humanly speaking, as far as God has conditioned his own proceedings) have saved the world; for the Jews were the representative nation, to which the representative man must belong.—*Alford*.

5. **To redeem them . . . under the law**—Primarily the Jews; but as these were the representative people of the world, the *Gentiles*, too, are included in the redemption. Chap. 3. 13.—*D. Brown*. Christ, being born under the law, a Jewish child, subject to its ordinances, by his perfect fulfillment of it, and by enduring, as the Head and in the root of our nature, its curse on the tree, bought off (from its curse and power) those who were under the law; and if them, then the rest of mankind, whose nature he had upon him.—*Alford*. **That we**—Primarily the Jews, but as representatives of all men. **Might receive the adoption**—One is *adopted* as a son who is not a son already; and, therefore, in this expression, one peculiarly belonging to the apostle Paul, we see the privilege of those who are by sin aliens from God to become, by their faith in Christ, his children. Those who embrace Christ, God's Son, by that act enter into the privilege of sonship with God.

## Authorized Version.

6 And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Ab'ba, Father.

7 Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; <sup>7</sup> and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.

8 Howbeit then, <sup>8</sup> when ye knew not God, ye <sup>9</sup> did service unto them which by nature are no gods.

<sup>7</sup> Rom. 8. 16. — <sup>8</sup> Eph. 2. 12. — <sup>9</sup> Rom. 1. 25; 1 Thess. 1. 9.

*Adoption* is one of the most comprehensive terms of the evangelical system. It includes the pardon of sin and the acceptance of our persons before God, which are the constituents of *justification*. It includes the new birth, through the quickening power of the Holy Ghost, which is the doctrine of *regeneration*. It includes the believer's growth in holiness, until he attains "the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ," which is *sanctification*. And, finally, it involves the saint's translation to heaven, to take possession of the child's inheritance, which is *glorification*. All, therefore, that the word "salvation" implies—in deliverance from the *guilt*, the *stain*, the *dominion*, and the *being* of sin—is potentially included in the idea of *adoption*; and is in every particular wrought out when that idea comes to be realized in its final results.—*B. M. Palmer*.

6. And because ye are sons—"And as a proof that ye really are sons."—*Ellicott*. With this sentence Paul wishes to confirm to the Galatians, in a way indisputable to themselves, that they actually have the position of sons and no longer that of servants; they also (he says) have this, as well as the Jewish Christians, as certainly as the Spirit also utters his voice in them.—*Schnoller*. **The Spirit of his Son**—The Spirit, which the Son of God has; plainly, moreover, which he has peculiarly as Son; the Son of God's Spirit of sonship. God gives the very same Spirit into the hearts of those whom he has accepted as his sons for the sake of his Son Christ.—*Schnoller*. **Crying**—This strong word doubtless expresses, first and chiefly, the assurance and the strength of the persuasion, the full, undoubting faith of having in God, our Father; also, however, as resulting from this, the fervor with which the soul turns to this Father; yet without direct reference to a condition of trouble in which a call is made for help.—*Schnoller*. It is the very Spirit itself which in our hearts utters the cry. Not only is there a groaning, (Rom. 8. 26,) as for a deliverance, but there is a cry, as ascending from our hearts to the Father on high.—*Whedon*. **Abba, Father**—The Hebrew says, "Abba," (a Hebrew term,) the Greek, "Father,"

## Revised Version.

6 tion of sons. And because ye are sons, God sent forth the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, Abba, 7 Father. So that thou art no longer a bondservant, but a son; and if a son then an heir through God.

8 Howbeit at that time, not knowing God, ye were in bondage to them 9 which by nature are no gods: but now

("Pater," a Greek term in the original,) both united together in one sonship and one cry of faith, "Abba, Father!"—*D. Brown*. It is simplest to suppose that the juxtaposition of the two equivalent expressions is meant to emphasize more strongly the idea of Father.—*Wieseler*.

It is said in the Babylonian Gemara, a Jewish work, that it was not permitted slaves to use the title of *Abba* in addressing the master of the family to which they belonged. If so, then the language which Christians are here represented as using is the language of freemen, and denotes that they are not under the servitude of sin.—*Barnes*.

That one word spoken in faith is better than a thousand prayers in a formal, lukewarm way: I myself have often found that when I can say but this word, *Father*, it doth me more good than when I call him by any other Christian name.—*Bunyan*.

7. No more a servant [Rev. Ver., *bondservant*.]—No more in bondage as under the law. But a son . . . an heir—Because a son, (of God,) therefore, according to the well-known hereditary right, also an heir of God.—*Schnoller*. By faith ye are one with the Son, so that what is his is yours; his sonship insures your sonship; his Spirit insures for you a share in the same.—*D. Brown*. **An heir of God through Christ** [Rev. Ver., *An heir through God*.]—The following note refers to this reading in Rev. Ver.]—This combines, on behalf of our race, the whole before-mentioned agency of the blessed Trinity, the Father has sent the Son and the Spirit, the Son has freed us from the law, the Spirit has completed our sonship, and thus the redeemed are heirs through the Triune God himself, not through the law, nor through the fleshly descent.—*Windischmann*.

8. Then [Rev. Ver., *At that time*] when ye knew not God—Alluding to the fact that the main body of the Galatian Church had been pagans.—*Whedon*. **Ye did service** [Rev. Ver., *Were in bondage*.]—The meaning is, "Ye were



## Authorized Version.

9 But now, <sup>10</sup> after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, <sup>11</sup> how turn ye <sup>12</sup> again to the weak and beggarly elements, wherunto ye desire again to be in bondage?

10 Ye <sup>11</sup> observe days, and months, and times, and years.

11 I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain.

## Revised Version.

that ye have come to know God, or rather to be known of God, how turn ye back again to the weak and beggarly rudiments, wherunto ye desire to be in bondage over again?

10 Ye observe days, and months, and seasons, and years. I am afraid of you, lest by any means I have bestowed labour upon you in vain.

<sup>10</sup> 1 Cor. 8, 20 — <sup>11</sup> Col. 2, 16 — <sup>12</sup> Or, back — <sup>13</sup> Heb. 7, 18 — <sup>14</sup> Rom. 14, 5.

*slaves* to; you were in a condition of *servitude*, as opposed to the freedom of the Gospel. The drift of the apostle is, to show that the Jews and Gentiles, before their conversion to Christianity, were in a state of vassalage or servitude, and that it was absurd in the highest degree to return to that condition again.—*Barnes*. **Are no gods**—That is, have no existence, such as their worshippers attribute to them, in the nature of things, but only in the corrupt imaginations of their worshippers.—*D. Brown*.

**9. Known God, or rather are known**—The Galatians did not so much acquire the knowledge of God as they were taken into knowledge, recognized by him. And this made their fall from him the more matter of indignant appeal as being a resistance of his will respecting them.—*Mford*. **How turn ye again** [Rev. Ver., *back again*] **to the weak and beggarly elements** [Rev. Ver., *Rudiments*.]—The first letters, hieroglyphs and child-pictures of pupillage. That is, the circumcision, the holidays, and the rituals of either Judaism or paganism.—*Whiston*. The *rudiments* are called *weak*, because they have not the power to atone for sinful man, and by communication of the Spirit to transform him inwardly, agreeably to what Paul says of the law, for example, Gal. 3. 21; Rom. 8. 3.—*Schmoller*. They are called *beggarly* on account of their relatively imperfect matter in comparison with the perfection and the riches of the Gospel.—*Wiesler*. It is as if a school-master should wish to go back to learning the A B C.—*Bengel*. **Ye desire again to be in bondage** [Rev. Ver., *To be in bondage over again*.]—They had been slaves to the rudiments in the form of heathenism; now they were desiring to enslave themselves *again* to the rudiments, and to *commence* them *anew* in the form of Judaism.—*Ellicott*. Not again to heathenism indeed, but to Judaism, both of which are included in "rudiments of the world."—*Schmoller*.

We may apply it to Christians now. Many sink into a kind of servitude not less galling than was that to sin before their conversion. Some become the slaves of mere ceremonies and forms in religion. Some are slaves to fashion, and the world yet rules them with the hand of a tyrant. They have escaped, it may be, from the galling chains of ambition and degrading vice and low sensuality, but they become slaves to the love of money, or of dress, or of the fashions of the world, *as if they loved slavery and chains*, and they seem no more able to break loose than the slave is to break the bonds which bind him. And some are slaves to some expensive and foolish habit. Professed Christians and Christian ministers, too, become *slaves* to the disgusting and loathsome habit of using *tobacco*, bound by a servitude as galling and as firm as that which ever shackled the limbs of an African. I grieve to add, also, that many professed Christians are slaves to the habit of "sitting long at the wine," and indulging in it freely. O that such knew the liberty of Christian freedom, and would break away from all such shackles, and *show* how the Gospel frees men from *all* foolish and absurd customs!—*Barnes*.

**10. Ye observe**—The apostle means to say that they were not only given to the celebration, but, precisely like the Jews, were already scrupulous also as to the correct reckoning of time for their holy-days. Days, with reference to the Sabbath; months, probably with reference to the new moons, not because certain months, the seventh especially, were regarded as peculiarly holy months; seasons within the year, with reference to the feasts; years with reference to the Sabbatical year, not the year of jubilee, which was no longer celebrated.—*Wiesler*.

**11. Afraid of you**—"I fear concerning you." **Labor in vain**—His fears were that they had no genuine Christian principle. They had been so easily perverted and turned back to the servitude of ceremonies and rites, that he was apprehensive that there could be no real Christian principle in the case.—*Barnes*.

## Authorized Version.

12 Brethren, I beseech you, be as <sup>14</sup> I am; for I am as ye are: ye have not injured me at all.

13 Ye know how <sup>15</sup> through infirmity of the flesh, I preached the Gospel unto you <sup>16</sup> at the first.

14 And my temptation which was in my flesh ye despised not, nor rejected; but received me <sup>17</sup> as an angel of God, even <sup>18</sup> as Christ Je'sus.

15 <sup>4</sup> Where is then the blessedness ye speak of? for I bear you record, that, if it had been possible, ye would have plucked out your own eyes and given them to me.

16 Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth.

<sup>14</sup> Chap. 6, 14.—<sup>15</sup> 1 Cor. 2, 3.—<sup>16</sup> Chap. 1, 6.—<sup>17</sup> 2 Sam. 19, 27.—<sup>18</sup> Matt. 10, 40.—<sup>d</sup> Or, What was then?

12. Be as I am—Kopp explains it thus: "Imitate my example; for I, though a Jew by birth, care no more for Jewish rites than you." I am as ye are—Then I became as you, and at that time you did me no wrong, but, on the contrary, showed me all sympathy and reverence. Then comes in the inference, put in the form of a question at ver. 15, I must then have since become your enemy by telling you the truth.—*Alford*. Ye have not injured me [Rev. Ver., *Ye did me no wrong*. In the Rev. Ver. this clause is connected with the words that follow it.]—The key to rightly understanding these words is, their opposition with the other verbs, "*ye despised not nor rejected me, but ye received me, . . .*" below. To that period they refer, namely, to the time when he first preached the Gospel among them.—*Alford*.

13. Through [Rev. Ver., *Because of*] infirmities—He implies that bodily sickness having detained him among them contrary to his original intention was the occasion of his preaching the Gospel to them.—*D. Brown*. At the first [Rev. Ver., *First time*.]—*At the former time*; implying that at the time of writing he had been twice in Galatia.—*D. Brown*. His first visit is mentioned in Acts 16, 6, the second in Acts 18, 23.

14. My temptation [Rev. Ver., *That which was a temptation to you*.]—The truer reading seems to be, *your temptation*. That is, *your temptation* from my infirmity, to reject me with contempt.—*Whedon*. The *temptation* seems to have been the "*thorn in the flesh*" of 2 Cor. 12, 1, whatever that was; perhaps something con-

## Revised Version.

12 I beseech you, brethren, be as I am,

13 for I am as ye are. Ye did me no wrong: but ye know that because of an infirmity of the flesh I preached the

14 Gospel unto you the <sup>3</sup> first time: and that which was a temptation to you in my flesh ye despised not, nor <sup>4</sup> rejected; but ye received me as an angel

15 of God, even as Christ Je'sus. Where then is that gratulation <sup>6</sup> of yourselves? for I bear you witness, that, if possible, ye would have plucked out your eyes and given them to me.

16 So then am I become your enemy, because I <sup>6</sup> tell you the truth?

<sup>3</sup> Or, former.—<sup>4</sup> Or, spat out.—<sup>5</sup> Or, of yours.—<sup>6</sup> Or, deal truly with you.

nected with his *sight*, or some nervous infirmity.—*Alford*. Ye received me as an angel—Climatic, denoting the deep affection and veneration with which he was received; comp. 2 Cor. 5, 20; the Galatians received the apostle not only as an angel, but as one higher and more glorious, (Heb. 1, 4), even as him who was the Lord of angels.—*Ellicott*. The apostle contrasts the gladness and enthusiasm of their former reception of him with their present willingness to forsake his teachings.

15. Where is then the blessedness [Rev. Ver., *That gratulation of yourselves*.]—The *blessedness* is the self-felicitation expressed by the Galatians in their first joy in the Gospel. They have grown cold, and Paul now demands what has become of that first joy and love.—*Whedon*. How highly blessed you pronounced yourselves that you were able to hear me?—*Weiseler*. For I bear you record—A proof to what lengths this *congratulation of themselves*, and, consequently, their high value, for Paul ran at his first visit.—*Alford*. Ye would have plucked out your own eyes—A proverbial mode of speech derived from the high value and indispensableness of the eyes.—*Schmoller*.

The inference, then, of any ocular disease from these words themselves seems to me precarious. Certainly Acts 23, 1 ff. receives light from such a supposition; but with our very small knowledge on the subject many conjectures may be hazarded with some show of support from Scripture, while none of them has enough foundation to make it probable on the whole.—*Alford*.

16. Am I therefore become your enemy—He had been received as their friend, but the

Jewish teachers had endeavored to make them his enemies, and to induce them to look upon him as *their* enemy. **The truth**—For telling them *the truth* is he who was once their *angel* now their *enemy*? The change was neither in *the truth* nor its apostle, but in themselves. So is it with backsliders and apostates; the truth and its ministers they once loved they often now dread and hate.—*Whedon*. Is my telling you the truth in regard to the tendency of the doctrines which you have embraced, and the character of those who have led you astray, and your own error, a proof that I have ceased to be your friend?—*Barnes*.

#### Authorities to be Consulted.

See Introduction to Galatians in the commentaries. Schaff, p. 282. Farrar, chaps. xxxv, xxxvi. Conybeare and Howson, chap. xviii. Pulpit Analyst, vol. v. Freeman's Manners and Customs, 781, 861. Nast's Introduction, p. 349. Sermons, by Martin Luther, (in Masterpieces of Pulpit Eloquence,) on Method and Fruits of Justification; W. Cunningham, on The Atonement; J. S. Buckminster, Fitness of the Time for the Gospel; F. Wayland, two sermons on Salvation by Christ; Charles Kingsley, God's Offspring; J. H. Newman, The Church and the World; Discourses on Galatians by J. Calvin, and Sermons on Galatians by S. Pearson, Foster's Cyclopaedia of Illustrations, [numbers preceded by a star indicate poetical quotations,] ver. 1: \*1111; 2: 1822; 4: 696, 7199; 5: 4879, 33, 34; 6: 204, 2487, 6069, 6340; 7: 6639, 7205; 9: 257, 6538; 10: 11386, 11564; 15: 8537; 16: 12192.

#### Practical Thoughts.

##### [THE LIBERTY OF THE GOSPEL.]

1. Before the stage of liberty comes the stage of training for liberty, while the heir of freedom is apparently a servant. Ver. 1.
2. There can be no liberty until one has been trained to the spirit of obedience to law. Vers. 2, 3.
3. Christ comes to lead men up from the state of service to the privilege of sonship. Ver. 5.
4. True liberty comes when the heart is in such fellowship with Christ that his Spirit reigns freely within us. Vers. 6, 7.
5. The disciple is not only a freeman, but an heir to the kingdom of God through Christ. Ver. 7.
6. The disciple of Christ is free from subjection to a formal service to ordinances and laws. Vers. 9, 10.

#### Sermon Outline.

BY REV. WILBUR F. CRAFTS, M.A.

For freedom did Christ set us free; stand fast, therefore, and be not entangled again in the yoke of bondage. Gal. 5. 1. "Decoration Day," just passed, and the lesson which is to-day studied in Sunday-schools all round the world, suggest our theme, "Bondage"—"Liberty!" In those two words our national history is epitomized. And yet how seldom is the full meaning of these words considered! We have bondage in our own country still—not to King George or King Cotton, but to prejudices, appetites, customs. "What will they say?" has slaves in every State who need emancipation. Pilate with a crown on his head was a slave of public opinion. In the Declaration of Independence the signers "*pledge* their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor" in support of the cause. So every temperance pledge is a declaration of independence against King Custom or King Appetite. You don't think yourself in bondage to appetite. Try to go without your wine for a week, and see. A Spaniard was imprisoned for forty years in a cell where he could neither stand erect nor take more than two steps in the same direction. When he was at length set free he found that he could neither stand erect nor take more than two steps forward, even on the highway. He was now the prisoner of habit. Most of the slaves of habit or prejudice are unconscious of their slavery, like those Pharisaic slaves to sectarianism who said to Christ, "We were never in bondage." One of the most pitiable of these blind slaves is the one who says, "I am my own master"—bondman as he is to his own pride and selfishness. "One is your master, even Christ." To have any other master is to be a slave. A merchant, as he follows some trick of trade in the struggle of competition, says to his conscience or his minister, "They all do it, and so *we have to do it*." That is the clanking chain of a slave to greed. There is nothing a free man *must* do but die in the path of duty. In every neighborhood there are slaves to gambling, to restless covetousness, to passionate profanity, to uncontrollable anger, to chronic impatience, to evil speaking, to habitual fretfulness, to persistent scolding, to periodic despondency, whose invisible chains grow stronger every day. You are "hobbed by the cords of your sins." When you try to break these chains you are only surprised at their strength. *You can* not break them, but

"The Lion of Judah can break every chain,  
And give us the victory again and again."

If the word "bondage" is only half understood, how much more is the word "liberty" unappreciated! It is often confounded with license, and hence the Bible says, "Use not liberty for an occasion of the flesh." "Not using your liberty as a cloak of maliciousness, but as servants of God." Liberty does not mean, Do as you please. Liberty has banks as well as channel. Our liberty is

bounded by the law of God on one side, and the other. Liberty gives us no right to send dynamite through the mails, or poisonous liquors through society. Liberty allows us to do as we please only so far as we please to do right. *It is freedom in things innocent.* Smollett, writing of England in 1740, says that the country was infested with unrestrained robbers through "the absurd notion that laws to prevent these acts of disorder would be *incompatible with the liberty of the British subject.*" That absurdity has been transferred from robbers to rumsellers. So, in the spiritual realm, license is misnamed *liberalism*, which, in fact, is one of the most illiberal of the isms. In any case the chief aim of religion is not to be *liberal*, but to be *true*. Who wants a liberal watch, or a liberal style of bookkeeping? Let the watch be *true* to the sun, and the bookkeeper to the facts. "If the truth shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." "Christian liberty" means more than tolerance. The whole epistle of Galatians is devoted to explaining it as love fulfilling the law. George Macdonald says, in the spirit of this epistle, "When God's will is our law we are but a kind of noble slaves; but when God's will is our will then are we his free children."

God freely obeys his own laws because his character is in harmony with them. When God's Spirit has really come into our hearts and made us sons of God, we too shall freely do his will from love of it. Thus "for freedom Christ makes us free." We have no constraint because we have no disposition to beat against the bars of God's Thou shalt nots. We delight to do his will, and so are free in doing it.

At Chautauqua, one evening, among other fireworks, a paper balloon was put up. It rose a few feet from the ground, and then was caught in the lower limbs of a tree. There was a struggle, the balloon seeking to rise, the tree striving to hold it down. It escaped from one branch only to be caught in another. After several struggles, which we watched with interest, the balloon freed itself entirely from the tree, and rose into the sky in perfect liberty. Picture of many a Christian experience! While we are not fully separated from the world every duty brings a struggle between "I wish" and "I ought," but when we fully accept God's will and his renewing Spirit our religious life rises out of earthly entanglements into perfect liberty where there is no more struggling against God's law, because God's Spirit in us delights to do it, and we can say, "*My will is the will of my God.*"

A. D. 58.]

LESSON X.

[June 8.

JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH.—Rom. 3. 19-31

**GOLDEN TEXT.**—Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ.—ROM. 5. 1.

**TIME.**—A. D. 58, probably in the spring.

**PLACE.**—This epistle was written from Corinth, soon after the Epistle to Galatians. See last lesson.

**CONNECTING LINKS.**—The design of this epistle was to set forth the great truths of the Gospel as preached by Paul.

**INTRODUCTION.**—The books of Acts and Romans are, indeed, very strikingly the complements of each other. The former unfolds the *events*, the latter the *theology* and *morals*, of the apostolic era. With great propriety, therefore, though out of the chronological order of their publication, have these two books stood in contact in the canon. The penetrative inquirer in the reading of Paul's debates in the synagogues (for instance, of Ephesus, of Thessalonica, of Corinth, and especially on that memorable day at Rome—Acts 23, 17-29) desires to be present and listen to the sharp encounter. What were the issues, and the methods, and the terms of the discussion? To this query Romans furnishes the comprehensive reply. It every-where presents the traces of struggle and battle. Compare it, on this point, with Philippians or Ephesians. And it explains many of the peculiarities of the style, and solves not a few of the difficulties of the argument to say: The Book of Romans is a summary of the hand-to-hand synagogue debates of Paul with the Jews of his day.—*D. D. Whedon*. The real basis of this, as of every other epistle, is "Christ as the common foundation on which Jew and Gentile could stand; the bond of human society, the root of human righteousness." It may be quite true that throughout all these high reasonings, and the many questions to which they give rise, there runs an undertone of controversy, and that the apostle never lost sight of the fact that he was endeavoring to prove for the Roman Christians, and through them to the entire Church, the new and startling doctrine that, since the annihilation of sin was rendered possible by faith, and faith alone, all claims founded on Jewish particularism were reduced to nothingness. This is the main point: but even the practical questions, which receive a brief decision at the close of the epistle, are handled in strict accordance with the great principles which he has thus established of the Universality of Sin and the Universality of Grace.—*Farrar*.

## Authorized Version.

19 Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law; that <sup>1</sup>every mouth may be stopped, and <sup>2</sup>all the world may become <sup>3</sup>guilty before God.

20 Therefore <sup>4</sup>by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for <sup>5</sup>by the law is the knowledge of sin.

21 But now <sup>6</sup>the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being

<sup>1</sup> Ezek. 16. 63.—<sup>2</sup> Chap. 2. 2.—<sup>3</sup> Or, subject to the judgment of God. <sup>4</sup> Psal. 143. 1.—Gal. 2. 16.—1 Tim. 1. 10.—Eph. 2. 8, 9; Titus 2. 5.—<sup>5</sup> Chap. 7. 5.—<sup>6</sup> Heb. 11. 1; 1 Pet. 1. 1.

**19. The law saith**—*The law* is a declaration of the will of God, designed to mold man's conduct, and to make known the principles of God's government.—*Bel.* It saith (Rev. Ver., *It speaketh*).—Not merely "saith;" the verb is different the second time, and the sense is, that whatever the law says, its speech or address is to, or for, that is, its language belongs to, is true of, when not otherwise specified, *those who are under* (literally, *in*) *the law*.—*Alford.* **To them who are under the law**—The apostle makes this remark in order to prevent the Jew from evading the force of his conclusion.—*Barnes.* **That**—*In order that*, not "so that;" the bringing in all the world guilty before God is an especial and direct aim of the revelation of God's justice in the law; that his grace, by faith in Christ, may come on all who abandon self-righteousness and believe the Gospel.—*Alford.* **Every mouth may be stopped**—A *stopped mouth* denotes the confusion of a guilty person, who, being accused, hath no answer to make for himself.—*Macknight.* **All the world**—So that the Jew is compelled to take rank with the Gentile on the common footing of universal ruin before God.—*Whedon.* **Guilty before God** [Rev. Ver., *Under the judgment of God*.]—The law itself, by its very existence, stands as man's accuser, and shows how far he has transgressed from the ways of righteousness: how far he has fallen below the requirements of God.

Alas! he who boasteth himself in the works of the law, he doth not hear the law. When that speaks it shakes Mount Sinai, and writeth death upon all faces, and makes the Church itself cry out, "A Mediator! else we die." The law out of Christ is terrible as a lion; the law in him is meek as a lamb.—*Bunyan.*

**20. By the deeds** (Rev. Ver., *works*) **of the law**—*The law* is that universal law which Jews

## Revised Version.

19 Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it speaketh to them that are under the law; that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may be brought under <sup>1</sup>the judgment of God; because <sup>2</sup>by <sup>3</sup>the works of the law shall no flesh be <sup>4</sup>justified in his sight; for <sup>5</sup>through the law *cometh* the knowledge of sin.

21 But now apart from the law a righteousness of God hath been mani-

<sup>1</sup> Or, out of.—<sup>2</sup> Or, works of law.—<sup>3</sup> Or, accounted righteous.—<sup>4</sup> Or, through law.

and Gentiles are alike obligated to obey, the law of universal and eternal right. This law was, for the Jew, embraced essentially in the Decalogue; and the so-called Mosaic law was a system of special enactments designed to bring men into harmony with that central law.—*Whedon.* **Shall no flesh**—Since it is the only form in which human nature presents itself to us, "all flesh" denotes all mankind.—*Bel.* **Shall no flesh be justified**—To justify is not to make just, in the sense of making holy, but to *declare* just. When the judge justifies a man, he does not by that act render him any better than he was before; he simply adjudges him to be innocent. Justification, therefore, is an act of God, whereby he remits our sins, and accepts us as righteous.—*J. W. Alexander.* The reasoning is: the law has no such office, in the present state of human nature, manifested both in history and Scripture, as to *render* righteous; its office is altogether different, namely, to *detect* and *bring to light* the *sinfulness* of man.—*Alford.* **Knowledge of sin**—God gave it in order to make us conscious of our lost estate, and thus to prepare us for a revelation of righteousness through Christ. In ages to come we shall look back upon the law, not as a failure, but as the guardian slave who drove us to Christ, (Gal. 3. 24,) and as an essential link of the chain which raised us from our lost estate to eternal obedience and blessedness.—*Bel.*

**21. But now**—A moment ago we heard, and our conscience re-echoed within us, the thunders of the law. Suddenly in the midst of our self-condemnation the cheerful voice of the Gospel gladdens our ears.—*Bel.* **Righteousness of God**—It is the righteousness which proceeds from God which personally appeared in Christ, "who is our righteousness," and which is communicated to the believer for Christ's sake in the act of justification by faith.—*Lange.*

## Authorized Version.

witnessed by the Law and <sup>6</sup> the Prophets;

22 Even the righteousness of God *which is* by <sup>7</sup> faith of Je'sus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe; for <sup>8</sup> there is no difference:

23 For <sup>9</sup> all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;

24 Being justified freely <sup>10</sup> by his grace

## Revised Version.

festes, being witnessed by the law

22 and the prophets; even the righteousness of God through faith <sup>5</sup> in Je'sus Christ unto all <sup>6</sup> them that believe;

23 for there is no distinction; for all have sinned, and fall short of the

24 glory of God; being justified freely

<sup>6</sup> 1 Pet. 1. 10.—<sup>7</sup> Chap. 4.—<sup>8</sup> Col. 3. 11.—<sup>9</sup> Gal. 3. 22.—<sup>10</sup> Matt. 20. 28; Eph. 1. 7; Eph. 2. 8; Col. 1. 14; 1 Tim. 2. 6; Heb. 9. 12; 1 Pet. 1. 18, 19.

<sup>5</sup> Or, of.—<sup>6</sup> Some ancient authorities add *and upon all*.

Without the law (Rev. Ver., *Apart from the law*).—It does not mean that God abandoned his law, or that Jesus Christ did not regard the law, for he came to "magnify" it, (Isa. 42. 21;) or that sinners *after* they are justified have no regard to the law, but it means simply what the apostle had been endeavoring to show, that justification could not be accomplished by *personal* obedience to any law of the Jew or Gentile, and that it must be accomplished in some other way.—*Barnes*. **Is manifested** [Rev. Ver., *Has been manifested*.]—In the advent of Christ and the opening of the new revelation. The perfect tense sets forth the manifestation of this righteousness in history as *an accomplished and still enduring fact*.—*Alford*. **Witnessed by the law and the prophets**—This righteousness which, so to speak, had long been buried under the types and indistinct utterances of the old dispensation, has now in the Gospel been made clear and apparent.—*Hodge*.

22. **The righteousness of God**—See on ver. 21. **By faith of Jesus Christ** [Rev. Ver., *Through faith in Jesus Christ*.]—This faith is not simply the belief of the intellect, embracing the historical facts of Christ's character and death. It is the faith or fidelity of the whole man. It is the act of the assenting intellect, the consenting heart, and the accepting will, by which man's soul deposits itself into the hands of the Redeemer, by his mighty arm to be carried through every danger into everlasting safety. It is self-surrender to Christ.—*Whedon*. **Unto all**—In the fact that is offered to all, and commanded to be preached to all. **Upon all** [Omitted in the Rev. Ver.].—That is, if this clause be accepted in the text, belonging to all in its acceptance, accepted by all. **That believe**—All who exercise faith in Christ Jesus, by self-surrender to him, are saved without the righteousness set forth in the standards of the law. **There is no difference** [Rev. Ver., *No distinction*.]—No distinction made be-

tween Jew and Gentile, for both are saved on the same terms of faith in Christ. The Jew was saved not by his law but through his casting of himself on Jesus as his Saviour, and the same salvation was the privilege of the Gentile. This verse, more precisely than any other, states the great principle which is the central thought of this epistle.

23. **All have sinned**—Though men differ greatly in the *nature* and *extent* of their sinfulness, there is absolutely no difference between the best and the worst of men, in the fact that "all have sinned," and so underlie the wrath of God—*D. Brown*. **Come short** [Rev. Ver., *Fall short*.]—The reason for substituting this for the *come short* of the Authorized Version is this: the latter may be mistaken for the past tense, after the auxiliary "*have*," whereas it is *present*.—*Alford*. **Of the glory of God**—In this passage, since the words "glory of God" would be misunderstood, we prefer the words *approbation of God*. Man once possessed the approval of God. God looked with joy upon his own image, the monument of his own skill. Gen. 1. 31. But man sinned, and thus lost his primal beauty. All have sinned, and thus fallen short of the moral character which God approves.—*Beet*.

24. **Being justified**—On the word *justified*, see note on ver. 20. **Freely**—It is a free, undeserved gift, not merited by our obedience to the law, and not that to which we have any claim.—*Barnes*. Though the justification is conditioned upon faith, yet the faith is no compensation to God for it.—*Whedon*. **By his grace**—*Grace*, that is, God's love to the sinner; saving love is the efficient cause; *redemption* by the blood of Christ the objective means; *faith* the subjective condition of justification.—*Dr. Schaff*. We are ever to keep in mind that our salvation comes from pure grace or kindness on God's part. We are saved, not because we deserve to be saved, not because we have earned salvation, but be-

## Authorized Version.

through the redemption that is in Christ Je'sus:

25 Whom God hath <sup>b</sup> set forth to <sup>"</sup> be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God;

26 To declare, *I say*, at this time his

<sup>b</sup> Or, for ordained.—<sup>a</sup> Lev. 16, 15, 1 John 4, 10.—<sup>c</sup> Or, passing over.

cause God loves us in all our unworthiness. **Through the redemption**—The word translated *redemption* has two senses in the New Testament. (1) It means properly "a deliverance effected by the payment of a ransom." This is its primary etymological meaning. (2) It means deliverance simply without any reference to the means of its accomplishment, whether by power or wisdom. Luke 21, 28. When applied to the work of Christ, as effecting our deliverance from the punishment of sin, it is always taken in its proper sense, *deliverance effected by the payment of a ransom*.—*Hodge*.

A millionaire may bestow a fortune on a beggar simply on the condition of his coming, kneeling down, and stretching forth his hand to take it. There would thereby be no merit on the beggar's part. There might be great demerit in his refusing, and turning his back and calling his benefactor a liar; but there would be no merit in his performing the condition and obtaining the grace. So the receptive faith by which the sinner yields to God's mercy, though it be a condition, may have no merit.—*Whodon*.

**To be a propitiation**—The sacrificial word *propitiation* proves that the redemption is sacrificial, and tells us what the ransom is. It is found in the Authorized Version only here and in 1 John 2, 2; 4, 10; but is equivalent to "atonement" in the Old Testament, and to "reconciliation" in Heb. 2, 17. To make atonement or *propitiation* is to shelter the head of the sinner from the punishment due to his sin.—*Beet*.

25. **Whom God set forth**—God set Christ crucified before the eyes of men to be a sacrifice by means of which the punishment due to sin might be averted. **Through faith in his blood** [Rev. Ver., *Through faith by his blood*.]—*Through faith* as the subjective means of appropriation of this propitiation. These words are not to be joined (as in the Authorized Ver.) with "in his blood," as if the faith were exercised on the atoning blood of Christ—for such an expression as *faith, or believing in the blood of Christ*, would be unexampled—and (which is decisive)

## Revised Version.

by his grace through the redemption 25 that is in Christ Je'sus; whom God <sup>7</sup> set forth <sup>"</sup> to be propitiation, through <sup>9</sup> faith, by his blood, to shew his righteousness, because of the passing over of the sins done aforetime, in 26 the forbearance of God; for the shewing, *I say*, of his righteousness

<sup>7</sup> Or, purposed.—<sup>8</sup> Or, to be *propitiatory*.—<sup>9</sup> Or, *faith in his blood*.

the clause ought to be [as in Rev. Ver.] *by his blood*, and requires a primary, not a subordinate, place in the sentence, because the next clause, "to declare his righteousness," directly refers to it.—*Alford*. **To declare** [Rev. Ver., *show*] **his righteousness**—*Judicial righteousness, justice*. A *sin-offering* betokens on the one side the expiation of guilt, and on the other insures pardon and reconciliation; and thus the death of Christ is not only a proof of God's grace and love, but also of his judicial righteousness, which requires punishment and expiation.—*Alford*. **For the remission of sins** [Rev. Ver., *because of the passing over of the sins*.]—Observe the fact mentioned is not *forgiveness*, or *remission*, as the Authorized Version erroneously renders it, but [as in Rev. Ver.] *passing over*, or *overlooking*, which is the work of *forbearance*, (see Acts 17, 30,) whereas *forgiveness* is the work of *grace*.—*Alford*. **Sins that are past** [Rev. Ver., *The sins done aforetime*.]—Sins committed before the death of Christ. That atoning death reflected back its efficacy upon previous ages and generations. That is, God, in view of that foreknown atonement, withheld penalty until the sacrifice, and then fully pardoned it.—*D. D. Whodon*. **Through the forbearance of God**—The meaning of this verse is that by the death of Christ as a propitiation, or substitute for sin, God vindicates his forbearance in not exacting the full punishment for the sins committed before the death of Christ. We who live after that death are forgiven through its atoning virtue, and they who lived before it were also forgiven and accepted by virtue of the divine purpose to send a Redeemer and substitute.

26. **To declare** [Rev. Ver., *For the showing of*.]—This second *showing forth* is distinguished from that in the last verse as the *fuller and ultimate object* of which that was a subordinate part, with a view to the (or His) *manifestation of His righteousness in this present time*.—*Alford*. **At this time** [Rev. Ver., *At this present season*.]—In antithesis with the *past time* of forbearance.

## Authorized Version.

righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Je'sus.

27 Where <sup>2</sup>is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay: but by the law of faith.

28 Therefore we conclude <sup>12</sup>that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.

## Revised Version.

at this present season: that he might himself be <sup>11</sup>just, and the <sup>11</sup>justifier of him that <sup>12</sup>hath faith <sup>13</sup>in Je'sus.

27 Where then is the glorying? It is excluded. By what manner of law? of works? Nay: but by the law of

28 faith. <sup>14</sup>We reckon therefore that a man is justified by faith apart from 29 <sup>15</sup>the works of the law. Or is God

<sup>12</sup> Rom. 2: 13. <sup>13</sup> Gal. 3: 12. <sup>14</sup> Gal. 3: 12. <sup>15</sup> Gal. 3: 12.

<sup>10</sup> See chap. 2, v. 13, margin. <sup>11</sup> See chap. 2, v. 14, margin. <sup>12</sup> See chap. 2, v. 13, margin. <sup>13</sup> See chap. 2, v. 14, margin. <sup>14</sup> Many ancient authorities read *etiam* <sup>15</sup> See chap. 2, v. 14, margin.

The reference is to the period of Christ's sacrificial death. His righteousness—The justice of his dealings with men in forgiving sin. Just—In the punishment of sin as threatened by the law. The justifier—In the plan of salvation he has shown a regard to the law by appearing his sin to be a substitute in the place of sinners, not to endure its precise penalty, for his sufferings were not eternal, nor were they attended with remorse of conscience, or by despair, which are the proper penalty of the law; but he endured so much as to accomplish the same ends as if those who shall be saved by him had been doomed to eternal death. That is, he showed that the law could not be violated without incurring suffering, and that it could not be broken with impunity. He showed that he had so great a regard for it that he would not pardon one sinner without an atonement.—*Verbs.* Of him which believeth [Rev. Ver., *of him that hath faith.*]—Faith is the one link in the chain which man must insert if he would make it complete. The atonement has been offered, the penalty has been laid, the pardon is ready, and the sinner may be proclaimed justified if he will but indorse the bond by accepting it. That acceptance is faith. Without it, so far as he is concerned, his relation is the same as if Christ had never died.

27. Where is boasting [Rev. Ver., *the glorying.*]—The confidence of the Jew that he alone would be saved because he alone possessed God's law, and his consequent exultation in his privilege. That Paul mentions, as the first result of the Gospel, a matter so small as the exclusion of Jewish boasting, may surprise us. But this boasting was probably the chief hindrance to the spread of the Gospel among the Jews. It lingered in the hearts even of believers. See Gal. 2: 2; 4: 21; 5: 4. Paul wishes to show at once that it is utterly inconsistent with the Gospel.—*Decl.* It is excluded—

No man has any ground for pride or self-gratulation in the manner of his salvation, for all the glory is on the side of God. By what law [Rev. Ver., *By what manner of law.*]—The word *law* here is used in the sense of arrangement, rule, or economy. By what arrangement, or by the operation of what rule, is boasting excluded?—*Short.* Of works—By works is meant not merely the ritual performances of the Mosaic law, though these are included, but every action of body or mind by which we assume to justly earn salvation, or claim to compensate or pay God for kindnesses done by him to us.—*Whedon.* The contrast is not here between the law and the Gospel as two dispensations, but between the law of works and the law of faith, whether found under the law or the Gospel, or (if the case admitted) any where else.—*Alford.* By the law [Rev. Ver., *a law*] of faith—The Gospel is correctly called a law, for it is an authoritative declaration of God's will concerning us, and of the principles on which he governs us. It is a law of faith, for it requires faith, and is thus distinguished from the Mosaic law, which required works.—*Decl.*

Man is naturally a very proud creature, prone to boast of and glory in any excellency, either real or supposed, belonging to himself.—*Burkitt.*

28. We conclude [Rev. Ver., *We reckon*] a man is justified by faith—When Christianity itself becomes overloaded with a pile of rituals and performances, prescribed as works for salvation, the whole is overthrown by appealing to the doctrine of justification by simple, heart-deep faith without the works of the law. To this Luther appealed against the ritualism of the Church of Rome; to this Wesley appealed against the formalism of the Church of England.—*Whedon.* As Luther said, "The doctrine of justification by faith is the doctrine which makes the distinction between a standing or a fallen Church." Without [Rev. Ver., *apart*



## Authorized Version.

29 *Is he* the God of Jews only? *is he* not also of the Gen'tiles? Yes, of the Gen'tiles also:

30 Seeing *it is* one God which shall justify the circumcision by faith, and uncircumcision through faith.

31 Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid; yea, we establish the law.

from *Without*: but more than without—so distinctly without as to be utterly and entirely separate from and independent of.—*Alford*.

29. **The God of the Jews only**—The Jews supposed that he was the God of their nation only, that *they* only were to be admitted to his favor. In these verses Paul showed that, as all had alike sinned, Jews and Gentiles, and as the plan of salvation by faith was adapted to *sinners*, without any special reference to *Jews*; so God could show favors to all, and all might be admitted on the same terms to the benefits of the plan of salvation.—*Barnes*. **Gentiles also**—In showing how completely Jewish boasting is excluded Paul purposes to take the ground of their own law and demonstrate it from that. He will show that God is not (the God) of Jews alone, but of Gentiles, and that *this very point was involved in the promise* made to Abraham, *by believing which he was justified*, (chap. 4,) and, therefore, that it lies in the *very root and kernel of the law itself*.—*Alford*.

30. **One God**—And he not a local or national god, but a universal God.—*Whedon*. The Rev. Ver. has "if so be that God is one." **Justify**—See on verses 20, 21. **The circumcision**—A general term for the Jews, distinguishing them from the Gentiles, who were uncircumcised. **By faith . . . through faith**—Too much stress must not be laid on the difference of the two prepositions. The former expresses the *ground* of justification, generally taken, by *or out of faith*; the latter the *means* whereby the man lays hold on justification, *by his faith*; the former is the objective ground, the latter the subjective medium.—*Alford*.

31. **Do we then make void the law** [Rev. Ver., *make the law of none effect*.]—But again the Jew may object, if this is the case, if faith be the *ground* and faith the *medium* of justification for all, circumcised or uncircumcised, *surely the law is set aside and made void*. That this is not so, the apostle both here asserts and is prepared to show by working out the propo-

## Revised Version.

*the God* of Jews only? is he not *the God* of Gen'tiles also? Yea, of 30 Gen'tiles also; if so be that God is one, and he shall justify the circumcision<sup>16</sup> by faith, and the uncircum- 31 cision<sup>17</sup> through faith. Do we then make<sup>18</sup> the law of none effect<sup>19</sup> through faith? God forbid; nay we establish<sup>20</sup> the law.

<sup>16</sup> Or, out of. —<sup>17</sup> Or, through the faith. —<sup>18</sup> Or, law. —<sup>19</sup> Or, through the faith. —<sup>20</sup> Or, law.

sition of verse 29, that the law itself belonged to a covenant whose *only and recipient was justified by faith*, and whose main promise was the *reception and blessing of the Gentiles*.—*Alford*. **We establish the law**—The Gospel, so far from contradicting the great moral principles set forth in the Old Testament, gives additional proof of their divine origin; and thus strengthens their authority.—*Beet*. **The law**—It is the moral, not ceremonial, law which the apostle speaks of. The ceremonial law is utterly abolished by the Gospel; but the moral law is not abolished, but established, by the Gospel; or, if abolished, it is only as a covenant, not as a rule.—*Barkitt*.

## Authorities to be Consulted.

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## Practical Thoughts.

## [THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO PAUL.]

1. That all mankind, Jews and Gentiles, are alike sinners before God, and equally in need of salvation. Ver. 19.

2. That the law was given to men to convince them of the utter impossibility of saving themselves. Ver. 19.

3. That the law has in itself no power to save

men, or to justify those who are unjust before God. Ver. 20.

4. That salvation is through the grace of God in sending his Son Jesus Christ as our redemption. Vers. 21-24.

5. That the sole condition of salvation is faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Ver. 22.

6. That the death of Christ is our propitiation and sacrifice, setting aside forever the offerings of the law. Ver. 25.

7. That before Christ's death men were saved by God's promise to provide a Redeemer, as since Christ's death they were saved by the fulfillment of the promise. Ver. 25.

8. That through Christ's redemption God is at once just, and the justifier of all who believe in Christ. Ver. 26.

9. That all mankind, Jews and Gentiles, are saved upon the same terms of faith in Jesus Christ.

A. D. 58.]

## LESSON XI.

[June 15.]

THE BLESSEDNESS OF BELIEVERS.—Rom. 8. 28-39.

**GOLDEN TEXT.**—We know that all things work together for good to them that love God.—ROM. 8. 28.

TIME.—A. D. 58. See on Lesson X.

INTRODUCTION.—There is a strong contrast between the seventh and eighth chapters of this epistle. In the seventh chapter we see man helpless, needy, without strength; in the eighth we see what man is when God has given him salvation. The whole of the chapter is a mounting song of exultation over the triumph of divine grace, reaching its height in the triumphant outburst of these last eleven verses.

Authorized Version.

28 And we know that <sup>1</sup>all things work together for good to them that love God, to them <sup>2</sup>who are the called according to *his* purpose.

<sup>1</sup> Gen. 50, 20; Prov. 12, 21; 2 Cor. 4, 17.—<sup>2</sup> 2 Tim. 1, 9.

**28. We know**—By faith and experience united. **All things**—Having giving an example in *prayer*, how the Spirit *helps our weakness*, and out of our ignorance and discouragement brings from God an answer of peace, he now extends this to *all things*, all circumstances by which the Christian finds himself surrounded. These may seem calculated to dash down hope and surpass patience, but *we know better concerning them*.—*Alford*. **Work together**—Not in an aimless and capricious manner, for this end and for that, now in one way and now in another, as though a stream should one day flow seaward, and the next back toward its fountain among the hills, but in one volume, along one channel, in one direction, toward one end.—*A. Raleigh*. **For good**—Their eternal welfare the fulfillment of the purpose of the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.—*Alford*. **To them that love God**—And *just so far and just so long as they love God*. Just so far as their love to God is diminished and sin is committed, just so far is the working of all things lessened and doubtful, and when their love to God ceases, the co-

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Revised Version.

28 And we know that to them that love God <sup>1</sup>all things work together for good, *even* to them that are called <sup>2</sup>according to *his* purpose. For whom

<sup>1</sup> Some ancient authorities read *God worketh all things with them for good*.

working for good ceases, and they are no longer *the called*. For it is to the man as a *God lover*, not as a *blank individual*, that these promises are made.—*Whedon*. **The called**—There is but one call, and that is the Gospel call to all mankind, from which no sinner is excluded. But there is a difference in men's dealing with the call. Some refuse to heed it and become thereby *the rejected*; others accept and obey it, enter into sonship with God, and become *the called ones*. All men are called, but only those who heed are *the called*. **According to his purpose**—The Gospel corresponds with, and makes known, a purpose of God concerning those to whom it is preached. In this purpose lies its real worth. Just so, when a king resolves to honor a man and, to carry out his resolve, calls him into his presence, the importance of the royal summons depends upon the royal purpose. This purpose is universal. 1 Tim. 2. 4. Therefore, all who hear the Gospel are called according to purpose.—*Beet*.

On the one hand, Scripture bears constant testimony to the fact that all believers are chosen and called by God, their whole spiritual life in

## Authorized Version.

29 For whom <sup>3</sup> he did foreknow, he <sup>4</sup> also did predestinate <sup>5</sup> to be conformed to the image of his Son, that <sup>6</sup> he might be the first-born among many brethren.

30 Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he <sup>7</sup> also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; <sup>8</sup> and whom he justified, them he also glorified.

<sup>3</sup> Exod. 33, 12; Ps. 1, 6; Jer. 1, 5; Matt. 7, 23; 2 Tim. 2, 19.  
<sup>4</sup> Eph. 1, 5.—<sup>5</sup> John 17, 22.—<sup>6</sup> Gal. 4, 1, 18.—<sup>7</sup> 1 Cor. 1, 24; Eph. 4, 4; Heb. 9, 15.—<sup>8</sup> 1 Cor. 6, 11.

## Revised Version.

he foreknew, he also foreordained *to be conformed to the image of his Son*, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren: and whom he foreordained, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.

its origin, progress, and completion, being from Him, while on the other hand, its testimony is no less precise that he willeth all to be saved, and that none shall perish except by *wilful rejection* of the truth. So that, on the one side, God's *sovereignty*, on the other, *man's free will*, is plainly declared to us. *To receive, believe, and act on both these, is our duty and our wisdom.* They belong, as truths, no less to *natural* than to revealed religion, and every one who believes in a God must acknowledge both. But all the attempts to *bridge over the gulf between the two* are futile, in the present imperfect condition of man. The very reasonings used for this purpose are clothed in language framed on the analogies of this lower world, and wholly inadequate to describe God regarded as he is in himself.—*Alford.*

29. Whom he did foreknow — Man's freedom as a free agent underlies God's free knowledge of him, and God's foreknowledge underlies God's determination. God's knowledge is caused by the future act, not the act caused by the knowledge; just as when we look at a man walking, our seeing and knowing his motion is caused by his moving, not his moving caused by our seeing and knowing. So that, in conclusion from the whole, God predestinates to glory only those whom he sees through time and space will finally meet the conditions requisite for that glorification. — *Whedon.* He also did predestinate [Rev. Ver., *He also foreordained.*] — Or predestined, marked out beforehand, especially in one's mind. Only found in Eph. 1, 5, 11; Acts 4, 28; 1 Cor. 2, 7. It is more definite than "purpose." A parent who, before his child is old enough for a trade, chooses a trade for him, predestinates the boy. He marks out beforehand a path in which he designs him to go. The purpose, whether carried out or not, is predestination. Predestination is simply a purpose, and by no means implies the inevitable accomplishment of the purpose. The boy marked out for one trade may enter another. It might,

however, be supposed that what God foreordained must in every case be realized. But God has thought fit that the accomplishment of his own purposes shall depend upon man's faith. Hence Paul solemnly warns his readers (chap. 11, 21, 22) that unless they continue in faith they will, although foreordained to glory, be cut off. So, in Jer. 18, 7-12, God expressly declares that the accomplishment of his purpose of blessing to Israel depends upon Israel's conduct. — *But.* The image of his son — The image of Christ here spoken of is not his moral purity, nor his sufferings, but, as in 1 Cor. 15, 49, that entire form of *glorification in body*, and *sanctification in spirit*, of which Christ is the perfect pattern, and all his people shall be partakers. — *Alford.* The firstborn among many brethren — The emphasis of the passage lies on "many brethren," rather than on the "firstborn," for the apostle is here speaking of the privileges of the saints in fraternal relationship with their elder brother. The thought is, that Christ will not be alone in his glory, but be surrounded by many who share his likeness.

30. Them he also called — Called by the Gospel. The only difference between their call and that of other men is that while others refuse to listen they obey and follow. Them he also justified — See note, Lesson X, verses 20, 24. These words do not imply that all who are called are *justified* and *glorified*. To teach this Paul would use his favorite words "as many as" (Chaps. 2, 12; 6, 3; 8, 14; 15, 4. He now thinks only of his readers in whom he confidently expects that God's purpose will be accomplished. That others had rejected the same call did not lessen its value to them, any more than the unfaithfulness of Judas lessened the value of the apostolic call of Peter and John. — *But.* The apostle, remember, is speaking entirely of *God's acts* on behalf of the believer; he says nothing *now* of that faith through which this justification is, *on his part*, obtained. — *Alford.* Glorified — He did not merely acquit

## Authorized Version.

31 What shall we then say to these things? If God *be* for us who can *be* against us?

32 He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?

33 Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? <sup>9</sup> *It is* God that justifieth;

34 Who *is* he that condemneth? *It is* Christ that died, yea rather, that is

<sup>9</sup> Isa. 50. 8.

them of sin, but did also *clothe them with glory*; the past tense being used, as the other past tenses, to imply the completion in the divine counsel of all these—which are to us, in the state of time, so many successive steps—simultaneously and irrevocably. — *Afford*. While he ponders the eternal purpose Paul forgets the distinctions of time, throws himself forward into what seems to him to be the near future, and looks back upon the purpose as already accomplished.

31. **What shall we then say**—What answer can the hesitating or discouraged find to this array of the merciful acts of God's love on behalf of the believer. — *Afford*. The apostle stands like a triumphant herald and challenges the universe for an opponent to meet this divine champion. — *Whedon*. **If God be for us**—*If God be on our side* all things are working out our good. For all things are under God's control, and, therefore, work out his purpose, and his purpose for us is glory. That God permits affliction to fall upon us only proves that affliction is the pathway to glory, else it would not be permitted. **Who can be against us** [Rev. Ver., *Who is against us?*]*—*Paul leaves us to develop the above inference, namely, that if God be on our side all things are on our side, and goes on to develop a similar inference, namely, that we have no adversary worthy of the name. For with God's strength, not with ours, must the strength of our adversary be compared. — *Dett*.

32. **He that spared not**—From the costliness of the means used to attain this purpose he will now prove how earnestly God is on our side. **Delivered him up**—Not to death merely, (as many take it,) for that is too narrow an idea here, but “surrendered Him” in the most comprehensive sense. Comp. John 3. 16: “God so loved the world that he gave his only begot-

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31 What then shall we say to these things? If God *is* for us, who *is*

32 against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not also with

33 him freely give us all things? Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? <sup>2</sup> *It is* God that justifi-

34 fieth; who is he that shall condemn? <sup>3</sup> *It is* Christ Je'sus that died, yea rather, that was raised from the dead,

ten Son.”—*D. Brown*. **Us all**—Refers only to Paul and his readers, who alone are now in his mind. **Freely give us all things**—When we see God giving up to shame and death his Son, that we may surround that Son in everlasting glory, we are sure that God will keep back from us no good thing; and that the ills of life, which result from the withholding of things commonly supposed to be good, are really blessings in disguise. — *Dett*.

33. **Who shall lay any thing**—An accusation is the accuser's condemnation of the accused. Therefore, to bring a charge against believers is to condemn those whom God has chosen to be his own. Thus God's decree of justification silences all doubt, even that suggested by the memory of past sin. — *Dett*. **God's elect**—“God's chosen ones;” those who, from having accepted the call, become *the called*, and are therefore the chosen or elect. **It is God that justifieth**—God's perpetual holding us righteous in spite of every calumniator is one continuous justifying act. That same justification holds us clear on earth, defends us against the danger of condemnation in the final judgment, and secures our place forever with the righteous. — *Whedon*. He saith not, “God who remitteth sins,” but which is much more, “God who justifieth.” For when the vote of the judge himself acquits, and of such a Judge, of what weight is the accuser. — *Chrysostom*.

34. **Who is he that condemneth**—This clause should properly belong to the previous verse. If God, the supreme Judge, justifies or pronounces innocent, who can condemn? **It is Christ** [Rev. Ver., *Christ Jesus*.]—All the great points of our redemption are ranged together, from the death of Christ to his still enduring intercession, as reasons for negating the question above. — *De Wette*. **Yea, rather**—*But rather*, corrective. We must look at

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risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who <sup>10</sup> also maketh intercession for us.

35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

36 As it is written, <sup>11</sup> For thy sake we

<sup>10</sup> Heb. 7, 25.—<sup>11</sup> Psa. 44, 27.

Christ, not as dead, but as risen from the dead. It is needless to add that for us (chap. 4, 25) Christ died and rose from the dead. Paul follows the dead and risen Saviour within the veil, and finds him at the right hand of God, still active on our behalf.—*Beza*. Right hand of God—The image is drawn from the custom of Oriental kings of seating persons of the highest honor at the right side of the throne. So Solomon seated his mother at his own right hand, (1 Kings 2:19;) so Salome desired to place one of her sons at the right hand and the other at the left of the royal Messiah, (Matt. 20, 21;) and so the psalmist seats the Messiah-Jehovah at the right hand of Jehovah. Psa. 110, 1.—*Wholen*. Maketh intercession for us—What the precise form of this intercession of the ever-living Jesus is we know not. Yet it can be no otherwise than an essential perpetuation of his high-priestly prayer in John 17. Though, however, his glorified form kneel not, and no voice be uttered, still his presence, with the history and glory of his death about him, is a perpetual memorial of mercy unto God.—*Wholen*. It cannot be taken to mean less than this, that the glorified Redeemer, conscious of his claims, expressly signifies his will that the efficacy of his death should be made good to the uttermost, and signifies it in some such royal style as we find him employed in that wonderful intercessory prayer which he spoke as from within the veil, (see John 17, 11, 12.) "Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am." See John 17, 24.—*D. Brown*.

35. Who shall separate us—The apostle says not (remarks Calvin nobly) "what," but "who," just as if all creatures and all afflictions were so many gladiators taking arms against the Christians.—*Tholuck*. From the love of Christ—Is this (1) our love to Christ, or (2) Christ's love to us, or (3) our sense of Christ's love to us? The second, maintained by Beza, Grotius, and many others, appears to me the only tenable sense of the words. For, having

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who is at the right hand of God, who

35 also maketh intercession for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or anguish, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Even as it is written,

\* Some ancient authorities read of God.

shown that God's great love to us is such that none can accuse nor harm us, the apostle now asserts the permanence of that love under all adverse circumstances, that none such can affect it; nay more, that it is by that love that we are enabled to obtain the victory over all such adversities. And finally he expresses his persuasion that no created thing shall ever separate us from that love, that is, shall ever be able to pluck us out of the Father's hand.—*Alford*. It is no ground of confidence to assert, or even to feel, that we will never forsake Christ; but it is the strongest ground of assurance to be convinced that his love will never change.—*Hodge*. Shall tribulation—The apostle now enumerates seven enemies which assail the Christian in vain. Not but that these foes can materially harm him, though they can neither accuse nor condemn him as before God. From their corporeal assaults even the divine Protector promises no immunity, and no deliverance from their earthly power. But they cannot break, they will brighten, rather, and strengthen the golden chain that fastens the justified to Christ.—*Wholen*. Tribulation—The word properly refers to pressure from without, afflictions arising from external causes. Or distress—This word properly means narrowness of place, and then, great anxiety and distress of mind, such as arises when a man does not know where to turn himself or what to do for relief. It refers, therefore, to distress or anxiety of mind, such as the early Christians were often subject to from their trials and persecutions.—*Barnes*. Or famine—To this they were also exposed as the natural result of being driven from home, and of being often compelled to wander amidst strangers, and in deserts and in desolate places.—*Barnes*. Or sword—Here named as representing death by violence, of which the sword was oftentimes the instrument.

36. As it is written—The quotation here expresses, "All which things befall us as they befell God's saints of old," and they are no new trials to which we are subjected. What if we

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are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.

37 Nay, <sup>12</sup> in all these things we are more than conquerors, through him that loved us.

38 For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor <sup>13</sup> principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come,

39 Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall <sup>14</sup> be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Je'sus our Lord.

<sup>12</sup>1 John 5. 4.—<sup>13</sup>Col. 1. 16; 1 Pet. 3. 22.—<sup>14</sup>John 10. 28; Col. 3. 3.

verify the ancient description.—*Alford*. Killed all the day—The continued slaughter extends from sunrise to sunset. The psalm refers to men who, though faithful to God, suffered military disaster. Their enemies looked upon them as sheep ready for slaughter, and the work of death went on without ceasing. The writer says that this destruction was the result of loyalty to God.—*Beet*.

37. In all these things—In the very endurance of all these trials and distresses. More than conquerors—The child of God triumphs in the midst of his trials. His earthly troubles do not mar, but greatly increase, his joy in the Lord; his temptations do not drive him from, but rather to, God, and strengthen, instead of weakening, him; the world cannot vanquish him, but yields to the victory of his overcoming faith. Death fails to destroy, but only brings him home to glory. Through him that loved us—It is doubtful whether "he who loved us" be the Father, or our Lord Jesus Christ. This is, I think, decided by "to him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood." Rev. 1. 5. The use of such an expression as a title of our Lord in a doxology, makes it very probable that *where unexplained*, as here, it would also designate him.—*Alford*.

38. Persuaded suggests deliberation followed by full conviction.—*Beet*. That neither—All the terms here are to be taken in their most general sense, and need no closer definition.—*Olshausen*. Death nor life—Well explained by De Wette as the two principal possible states of man, and not as equivalent to "any thing dead or living."—*Alford*. Personified life is armed with terrible dangers, and death is the very king of terrors.—*Whedon*. Nor angels—He probably refers here simply to angelic power

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For thy sake we are killed all the day long;

We were accounted as sheep for the slaughter.

37 Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that

38 loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present,

39 nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other <sup>6</sup> creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Je'sus our Lord.

<sup>6</sup> Or, creation.

of whatever kind. Not even angels are strong enough to tear us from God. Principalities—Those who hold the dignity of princes; that is, angel-princes, or archangels, as in Eph. 1. 21.—*Beet*. Powers—Kings, magistrates, etc.—*Beet*. Nor powers—Perhaps including the grand physical forces of universal nature known to science, especially to astronomy, in the abstract, but sometimes personified in Scripture as living agencies, and even identified with angels.—*Whedon*. Nor things present, etc.—No vicissitudes of time.—*Alford*.

39. Nor height, nor depth—Two anti-thetic potencies of space. The interpretation of heights and depths as equivalent to heaven and hell is scarce commensurate with the apostle's conception. He designates the opposite extremes of immensity. Height indicates the sublimity of loftiness or grandeur, depth the sublimity of darkness, obscurity, and terror. Both personified suggest limitless power for unknown destruction.—*Whedon*. Nor any other creature—Rather, "created thing"—any other thing in the whole created universe of God.—*D. Brown*. From the love of God—Here plainly enough God's love to us in Christ—to us, as we are in Christ, to us manifested in and by Christ.—*Alford*.

We may remark in view of it, (1) That it is the highest honor that can be conferred on mortal man to be a Christian. (2) Our trials in this life are scarcely worth regarding in comparison with our future glory. (3) Calamities should be borne without a murmur; nay, without a sigh. (4) The Christian has every possible security for his safety. The purposes of God, the works of Christ, the aid of the Holy Ghost, and the tendency of all events under the direction of his Father and Friend, conspire to secure his welfare and salvation. (5) With what thankfulness, then, should

we approach the God of mercy. In the Gospel we have a blessed and cheering hope which nothing else can produce, and which nothing can destroy. —*Barnes.*

#### Authorities to be Consulted.

See authorities on the epistle, with Lesson X. and Farrar, chap. xxvii. Conybeare and Howson, chap. xix. Schall, p. 291. Preacher's Lantern, i, 732, 482. Pulpit Analyst, iv, 115, 254; v, 209, 257. Bonar's Bible Thoughts and Themes, iii, 269, 274. Sunday Magazine, 1866, 350; 1869, 295. Homiletical Monthly, iii, 593. Stems and Twigs, i, 219, 196. Sermons, by J. Wesley, D. L. Moody, H. Blair, A. Raleigh, H. W. Beecher, (Series 5,) E. H. Sears, C. Spurgeon, (Series 8,) Bishop Sibbe, Archbishop Leighton, etc. Foster's Cyclopædia of Illustrations, [numbers marked with a star refer to poetical quotations,] ver. 28: 4740, 8978, 11266; 29: \*1239, 2339, 11196; 30: \*1051; 31: 3559, 7921; 32: 2767, 7268; 33: 7208, 3445; 34: 3334, 9963, 7383; 35: 4598, 7066; 37: 1713, 12162; 38, 39: 935, 1356, 2670.

#### Practical Thoughts.

##### [THE PRIVILEGES OF BELIEVERS.]

1. The believer in Christ may enjoy the consciousness that all the forces in the universe are, under God, working together for his good. Ver. 28.

2. The believer may rest in the consciousness that his name is eternally foreknown to the Divine mind as one of the redeemed and saved. Ver. 29.

3. The believer may enjoy the privilege of likeness to Christ as his elder brother and example. Ver. 29.

4. The believer has the privilege of hearing the Divine call addressed to himself out of all the sons of men. Ver. 30.

5. The believer has the privilege of being justified, having his record made clean in God's sight. Ver. 30.

6. The believer has the privilege of having God on his side, even though all the world may be against him. Ver. 31.

7. The believer enjoys the privilege of Christ's intercessions in his behalf. Ver. 34.

8. The believer has the assurance of complete triumph over every enemy and obstacle in the way of his enjoyment of the love of God Vers. 37-39.

#### Sermon Outline.

BY REV. WILBUR F. CRAFTS, M.A.

I. "All things work together"—planets and pebbles. No atom of the universe is independent.

Gravitation (that is, God unites stars and sand in the United States of nature. "All things work together"—yes, and for man's good. Not always for his temporal good, as Paley and others have tried to prove, but for his moral good at least. It does not seem so. Many of the forces of nature appear to be sent forth for man's destruction. Are night and storm and tempest working for man? "*It is written.*" God "maketh his angels winds, and his ministers a flame of fire." "Fire and hail, snow and vapor, and stormy wind, fulfill his word." "The night also is thine"—bringing to man not only a sense of danger, but also of dependence upon God; affording opportunity not only for deeds of darkness, but also of devotion. Even pain is blessed when we recognize that it cometh in the name of the Lord. "Affliction worketh for us." 2 Cor. 1, 17.

II. All things work together for man's good in the animal kingdom. When God would conquer Egypt for the rescue of his people, he attacked it with armies of locusts, lice, and frogs. So he sent a battalion of hornets against the Ammonites. In those days God allowed men to look behind the face of the universe-watch and see how he was moving the "living wheels" of animal life to help his people. The watch is closed to-day, but still

"Behind the dim unknown  
Standeth God within the shadow,  
Keeping watch above his own."

Dr. Bushnell in his "Moral Uses of Dark Things," points out moral uses even in animal infestations as mirrors of human lust and hatred, picturing (1) "The ferocity of our sin; (2) The venom, principle there is in it; (3) Its disturbing power; (4) Its interior effluery." Hence Jesus called the wicked but wily Herod, "that fox." On the same principle a mother was accustomed to picture the sins of her children to themselves by telling fables of animals which were represented as saying or doing what the children had said or done.

III. All things work together for good even in the realm of man's free choice where the wheels are independent minds—some of them minds that have chosen the wrong. Two revealed, uncontrollable facts stand together—the plan of God, and the free will of man—two lines of rail laid side by side, one by human, the other by divine, hands, on which the cars of history move ever onward. History, as well as nature, proclaims an overruling God. Napoleon was defeated at Waterloo by the coming, not of the Prussians, but of Providence. God said to that tidal wave of ambition, "Hitherto shalt thou come, but no farther." God made the wrath of Joseph's envious brethren to praise him, and work for Joseph's good. When he was made premier of Egypt he could see that his six great misfortunes had been six steps to the throne. Even slavery and slander had helped to quarry and build those steps for him. Such providences occur to-day. Wee Inn, believed to be the first Chinese maiden missionary ever sent out, landed at Hong-

kong a few years since. Twenty years ago Malay sailors brought her, then a little child, to Singapore, India, and sold her as a slave. The police gave her to a Christian lady teacher, and now the kidnapped slave-child enters the land of her birth as an ambassador of the King of kings. How evident is the "finger of God" in the infancy of Moses, the little outcast on the banks of the Nile. "Behold, the babe wept."

"Were not the innocent dew upon its cheeks  
A link in God's great counsels?"

Those tears unlocked for Moses the heart of Pha-

raoh's daughter, and then his palace, and thus gave him a preparation for his life-work as God's law-giver. God overruled a bad, cruel law to give good laws to all lands. So to-day the studies of infidels to overthrow Christianity have helped to establish it. The weapons cast into our camp, as in the march of Xenophon, have helped to kindle our fires. Let us not doubt that "every man's life is a plan of God" as surely as Joseph's and David's and Paul's, and that God makes all things work together that it may be fulfilled. Let our wills work with God that we may accomplish that for which we were created.

A. D. 58.]

LESSON XII.

[June 22.

OBEDIENCE TO LAW.—Rom. 13. 1-10.

GOLDEN TEXT.—Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers.—ROM. 13. 1.

TIME.—A. D. 58. See on Lesson X.

INTRODUCTION.—To the young Christian Church it could not but occur as a very momentous and very doubtful question, What are we to do with the governments of the world? They are all in pagan hands, with despots for their heads. In the old Testament the visions of Daniel describe them as beasts. Christ is our true king, and we know not how soon he may appear to overthrow all existing despotism and establish a universal reign of righteousness. Paul here furnishes the divine reply. Bad as human governments are, brutal and ferocious as is often their spirit, there is a benign and beneficial side to them. Government is ordained of God. Society is not formed by a fabled social compact. On the contrary, God has formed man for society, and government is the form into which he has obliged society to throw itself for its own peace and conservation. Hence, at all times, every government that truly is a government is ordained of God and entitled to our obedience. The exceptions to this normal law and its limitations, the apostle does not discuss. That an authority which commands us to violate the law of God should not be obeyed, he would, of course, not only have admitted, but affirmed. Had the emperor with all his powers required him to abjure Christ, he would have promptly disobeyed and suffered the result. Why? Because government, if ordained by God, is limited by the law of God. And if it oversteps the law of God, it oversteps the boundary line of its authority, and ceases to be a government, and has no title to be obeyed. Caesar, then, is no longer Caesar, but, so far, simply a private man. If the President of the United States orders his general to overthrow the Constitution he acts outside his office, and on that outside ground he is not President, and can claim no rightful obedience. What a legitimate government is the apostle does not here discuss. Nor does he raise the question of the right of revolution. The only question before him is, What is the duty of the Christian to a government which he acknowledges to be the government?—D. D. Whedon.

Authorized Version.

1 Let every soul<sup>1</sup> be subject unto the higher powers. For<sup>2</sup> there is no power

<sup>1</sup> Cor. 7, 21; Titus 3. 1.—<sup>2</sup> Prov. 8. 15; Dan. 2, 21; 4. 32; John 19. 11.

1. **Every soul**—Not exactly the same as every man. Our submission must be inward. Chap. 2. 9; Acts 2. 43; Eph. 6. 6; Matt. 22. 27.—*Beet.* **Be subject**—Submit. The word denotes that kind of submission which soldiers render to their officers. It implies *subordination*, a willingness to occupy our proper place, to yield to the authority of those over us. The word used here does not designate the *extent* of the submission, but merely enjoins it in general.

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13 Let every soul be in subjection to the higher powers: for there is no

The general principle will be seen to be, that we are to obey in all things which are not contrary to the law of God.—*Barnes.* **Higher powers**—The apostle uses the abstract, and not the concrete. It is the government that is of God, not necessarily the particular governor.—*Whedon.* **No power but of God**—The very existence of civil authority is the work of God, who has so constituted society that men are compelled to appoint rulers, and thus create



Authorized Version.

but of God: the powers that be are  
 • ordained of God.

2 Whosoever therefore resisteth the  
 power, resisteth the ordinance of God:  
 and they that resist shall receive to  
 themselves damnation.

3 For <sup>2</sup>rulers are not a terror to good  
 works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then  
 not be afraid of the power? Do <sup>4</sup>that  
 which is good, and thou shalt have  
 praise of the same:

4 For he is the minister of God to

a Or, ordered.—<sup>2</sup> 2 Sam. 23. 3; Ps. 94. 20.—<sup>4</sup> 1 Pet. 3. 13.

authority.—*Beet.* Ordained of God—By this we are not to infer, (1) That he approves their conduct; nor (2) That what they do is always right; nor (3) That it is our duty *always* to submit to them. Their requirements *may be* opposed to the law of God, then we are to obey God rather than man. Acts 4. 19; 5. 29.—*Barnes.* We may observe that the apostle here pays no regard to the question of the duty of Christians in revolutionary movements. His precepts regard an *established power*, be it what it may. *It*, in all matters lawful, *we are bound to obey.*—*Alford.*

The Romans to whom Paul wrote were under the rule, and lived not many yards from the palace of the Emperor Nero, whose is one of the names in history most conspicuous for tyranny and blood. Yet, bad as he was, and bad as was his government, it was the best thing of which the age was capable. When he was assassinated a series of civil wars and of brief tyrannies succeeded, under which the empire declined to its final fall under the incoming flood of the northern barbarians, under which the ancient society perished.—*Whedon.*

2. Whosoever . . . resisteth the power—That is, they who rise up against *government itself*, who seek anarchy and confusion, and who oppose the regular execution of the laws. **Resisteth** [Rev. Ver., *Withstandeth*] **the ordinance of God**—What God has ordained or appointed. This means clearly that we are to regard *government* as instituted by God, and as agreeable to his will. *When* established, we are not to be agitated about the *titles* of the rulers, not to enter into angry contentions, or to refuse to submit to them because we are apprehensive of a defect in their *title*, or because they may have obtained it by oppression. If the government is established, and if its decisions are not a manifest violation of the laws of God, we are to submit to them.—*Barnes.* **To themselves dam-**

Revised Version.

power but of God; and the *powers*

2 that he are ordained of God. Therefore he that resisteth the power, withstandeth the ordinance of God; and they that withstand shall receive to themselves judgment. For rulers are not a terror to the good work, but to the evil. And wouldest thou have no fear of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise from the same: for <sup>1</sup>he is a minister of God

<sup>1</sup> Or, it.

nation [Rev. Ver., *judgment*.]—For “*damnation*,” read “*condemnation*,” punishment for that disobedience, not eternal perdition, being meant.—*Alford.* That is, not from the magistrate, but from God, whose authority in the magistrate’s is resisted.—*D. Brown.*

3. Rulers are not a terror—The apostle here speaks of rulers *in general*. It may not be *universally* true that they are not a terror to good works, for many of them have *persecuted* the good; but it is generally true that they who are virtuous have nothing to fear from the laws. It is *universally* true that the design of their appointment by God was not to injure and oppress the good, but to detect and punish the evil. Magistrates, *as such*, are not a terror to good works.—*Barnes.* **To good works** [Rev. Ver., *To the good works*.]—Actions are personified, as if capable of fear.—*Beet.* It is appointed to protect the good against the evil; to restrain oppression, injustice, and fraud; to bring offenders to justice, and thus promote the peace and harmony of the community. As it is designed to promote order and happiness, it should be submitted to.—*Barnes.* **Not be afraid**—Fear is *one* of the means by which men are restrained from crime in a community. On many minds it operates with much more power than any other motive. And it is one which a magistrate must make use of to restrain men from evil. **Praise of the same**—You shall be unmolested and uninjured, and shall receive the commendation of being peaceable and upright citizens. The prospect of that protection, and even of that reputation, is not an unworthy motive to yield obedience to the laws.—*Barnes.*

4. He is the minister of God—Though as pagan, antichristian, or worldly, the government is, according to Daniel, a beast, yet as a conservator of society required by the divinely established laws of human nature, the governor is

## Authorized Version.

thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil.

5 Wherefore <sup>5</sup>ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience' sake.

6 For, for this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing.

7 Render <sup>6</sup>therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute *is due*; custom to whom custom; <sup>7</sup>fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour.

8 Owe no man any thing, but to love

<sup>5</sup> Eccles. 8. 2.—<sup>6</sup> Luke 20. 25.—<sup>7</sup> Lev. 19. 3.

the minister of God.—*Whedon.* Beareth not the sword in vain—*The sword*, perhaps in allusion to the dagger worn by the Cæsars, which was regarded as a symbol of the power of life and death. In ancient and modern times the sword has been carried before sovereigns.—*Alford.* A revenger to execute wrath [Rev. Ver., *An avenger for wrath.*].—Proof that the ruler's sword is no vain thing. God has put him in his place of authority in order that he may execute his anger against those who do wrong.—*Beet.* It betokens the character of the vengeance—that it *issues in wrath.*—*Alford.* According to the apostle the ruler is of God only as a revenger upon him that doeth evil. He is not a minister of God when he is the executioner of the good.—*Whedon.*

5. Ye must needs be subject—There is a moral necessity for subjection—one not only of terror, but of conscience; comp. “for the Lord's sake.” 1 Peter 2.—*Alford.* For conscience' sake—We are now bound to submit, not only for fear of punishment, (a well-grounded fear,) but also in order to have a consciousness that we are doing right.—*Beet.*

6. For this cause pay ye [Rev. Ver., *ye pay.*].—Proof, from the fact that we pay tribute, that our conscience binds us to submission. We actually pay taxes. Paul assumes, and all will admit, that we are bound to do so; and shows that the obligation to obedience rests on the same ground as does this admitted obligation.—*Beet.* Pay ye tribute—Primarily, the payment imposed upon us by a foreign power, such as the Romans over the Jews. Secondly, it means the tax necessary to the support of government.—*Whedon.* God's ministers [Rev. Ver., *Min-*

## Revised Version.

to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for <sup>2</sup>he beareth not the sword in vain: for <sup>3</sup>he is a minister of God, an avenger for

5 wrath to him that doeth evil. Wherefore ye must needs be in subjection, not only because of the wrath, but also for conscience sake. For for this cause ye pay tribute also; for they are ministers of God's service, attending continually upon this very thing.

7 Render to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute *is due*; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour.

8 Owe no man any thing, save to love

<sup>2</sup> Or, it, —<sup>3</sup> Or, it.

isters of God's service.]—It is used in Exod. 28. 35, 43, etc., of Aaron's ministry at the altar. It is different from, and stronger than, “minister” in verse 4; and denotes a public and sacred officer.—*Beet.* Attending continually—Spending their time and abilities in the very business of government, and, therefore, entitled to support.—*Whedon.* To this very thing—To this sacred ministrations. Paul says that our admitted obligation to pay taxes rests upon the sacred authority of the power which imposes them. Since this obligation cannot otherwise be accounted for, it affords confirmation of the teaching that the rulers of the state are ordained by God.—*Beet.* Tertullian remarks that what the Romans lost by the Christians refusing to bestow gifts on their temples they gained by their conscientious payment of taxes.—*Alford.*

7. Render, therefore—Free yourselves from all debts by paying them. Tribute . . . custom . . . fear . . . honor—*Tribute* is direct payment for state purposes; *custom* is toll, or tax on produce. *Fear* to those set over us and having power, *honor* to those, but likewise to all, on whom the state has conferred distinction.—*Alford.* Honor—A mark of respect; of respect, in this case, for the office of the ruler. This respect is independent of our estimate of the man who holds the office.—*Beet.*

8. Owe no man—The debt due to the state authorities suggests another debt due to each of our fellow-citizens. And Paul uses the general exhortation, expressed now in negative form, to press upon us our obligation to love all men. Any thing—This does not forbid contracts to pay at a future time, but a violation of the contract, or the violation of any obligation to pay

## Authorized Version.

one another: \* for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law.

9 For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if *there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou* <sup>9</sup> shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

10 Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love *is* the fulfilling of the law.

\* Matt. 7. 12 — 9 Lev. 19. 18, Gal. 5. 14, Col. 3. 14.

when justly due. We must avail ourselves of no technicality of law to avoid what is equitably due. In short, we must obey the golden rule in the moneyed transactions of life. The law of equitable love must underlie our business dealings.—*Whedon*. But to love one another—There is one debt from which we can never release ourselves by payment. However much we have done for our neighbor, we are still bound to love him.—*Bet.* “*Pay* all other debts; *be indebted* in the matter of love *alone*.” This debt increases the more the more it is paid, because the practice of love makes the principle of love deeper and more active.—*Alford*. **Fulfilled the law**—He who practices love, *the higher duty*, has, even before he does this, *fulfilled the law, the lower*.—*De Wette*. By the word *law* is meant not the Christian law, but *the Mosaic law* of the decalogue.

9 **Thou shalt not**—The negative form forbids every possible course but the right one, and so hems us in to the right. It is implied by this negative form that the directions toward wrong are innumerable, and man's impulses toward them as countless.—*Whedon*. **Comprehended**—That is, brought under one head—“united in the one principle from which all flow.”—*Alford*.

10. **Love worketh no ill**—The principle of love is personified, as in 1 Cor. 13. It moves us to do good to those we love, and thus prevents us from doing them harm. But to keep us back from injuring others is the purpose of the above commandments. Therefore, love accomplishes this purpose.—*Bet.* **Fulfilling of the law**—All the commandments of the law above cited are *negative*; the formal fulfillment of them is, therefore, attained by *working no ill* to one's neighbor. What *greater things* love works he does not now say; it *fulfills the law by abstaining from that which the law forbids*.—*Alford*.

## Revised Version.

one another: for he that loveth <sup>4</sup> his neighbour hath fulfilled <sup>6</sup> the law.

9 For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not covet, and if there be any other commandment, it is summed up in this word, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as

10 thyself. Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: love therefore is the fulfilling of <sup>6</sup> the law.

<sup>4</sup> Gr. *the other*.—<sup>6</sup> Or, *law*.—<sup>9</sup> Or, *law*.

*This love is exercised in obedience to the authority of God's word. It is a principle, not merely a feeling; it is cultivated and exercised as a duty, not yielded to merely as a generous instinct; it is a submission to God's command, not merely an indulgence of constitutional tenderness.*—*J. A. James*.

If all men would at once *abandon* that which is fitted to *work ill* to others, what an influence would it have on the business and commercial affairs of men? How many plans of fraud and dishonesty would it at once arrest? How many schemes would it crush? It would silence the voice of the slanderer; it would stay the plans of the seducer and the adulterer; it would put an end to cheating and fraud and all schemes of dishonest gain. The gambler desires the property of his neighbor without any compensation, and thus works *ill* to him. The dealer in *lotteries* desires property for which he has never toiled, and which must be obtained at the expense and loss of others. And there are many *employments* all whose tendency is to work *ill* to a neighbor. This is pre-eminently true of the traffic in *ardent spirits*. It cannot do him good, and the almost uniform result is to deprive him of his property, health, reputation, peace, and domestic comfort. He that sells his neighbor liquid fire, knowing what *must* be the result of it, is not pursuing a business which works *no ill* to him; and love to that neighbor would prompt him to abandon the traffic.—*Barnes*.

## Authorities to be Consulted.

See on Lessons X, XI, and Keble's Christian Year. Sunday Magazine, 1871, 303. Sermons, by A. Barnes, (in National Preacher, vol. xii.) Supremacy of the Laws; J. Howe, Reformation of Manners; R. South, Obedience for Conscience' Sake; Archbishop Leighton, (same subject); A. W. Hare, Love the Fulfilling of the Law; C. G. Finney, Love the Whole of Religion; Archbishop Trench, The Armor of Light. Foster's Cyclopedia of Illustrations, [numbers marked

with a star refer to poetical illustrations,] vers. 1: \*2809, 6632; 2: 2648, 6633; 3: \*1186, 9170; 4: \*1565, 10910; 5: 2810, 4157; 6: 9164, 10040; 7: \*1849, 8196; 8: 7896; 9: 10723; 10: 1717, 9211.

### Practical Thoughts.

#### CHRISTIANITY AND THE STATE.

1. The Gospel requires a loyal obedience to the authority of the state. Ver. 1.
2. The Gospel recognizes the constituted government as ordained and instituted by the King of kings, and, therefore, to be held in reverence. Ver. 1.
3. The Gospel gives to human law the sanction of a divine authority, with divine penalties for its infraction. Ver. 2.
4. The Gospel gives to the state not only the authority of human powers, but the authority of conscience. Ver. 5.
5. The Gospel commands men to pay the taxes which are necessary for the maintenance of government. Ver. 6.
6. The Gospel commands men to hold in due respect all who are the officers of the government. Ver. 7.
7. The Gospel commands as a motive leading to uprightness in all relations, universal love. Ver. 10.

### Sermon Outline.

BY REV. JOHN WILLIAMSON, D.D.

#### I. *The Lesson in General Affirms:*

- a. It is the Divine order that the individual should obey the state.
- b. The individual readily obeys the state when he has learned to love his neighbor as himself.

#### II. *The Lesson in Particular Affirms:*

1. a. A special reason, by implication, for this authoritative exhortation to political loyalty.
- b. Contrary to early, and even modern, Christian suspicion, Christ is not a civil ruler.

c. Civil government is not fortuitous nor human usurpation, but providential.

d. The penalties inflicted by civil government against law-breakers are in reality dispensations of Divine providence.

e. The tendencies of civil administrations are salutary.

f. Righteousness rejoices in peace and security under any flag.

g. Civil government has the Divine right to inflict capital punishment.

h. The authority of civil government should be obeyed, not through fear of its power merely, but as a positive Christian duty—one way to obey God.

i. Reverence, too, for political superiors, such by providential appointment and continuance, is a golden Christian duty.

2. a. It is unchristian to owe more than a single debt.

b. The profound philosophy of the Christian religion: one cannot love without serving the object of his affection.

c. Supreme love for God, and for one's neighbor as himself, postulates all human duty.

d. If any item of consciousness is perfectly clear, it is the extent to which each one loves himself; no one is the least in doubt as to the quantity and value of his self-love. It hath pleased God to sanctify this plain and positive consciousness as the criterion by which one may know when he is loving his neighbor sufficiently.

e. To love one's neighbor as himself is impracticable, because unnatural, until by the enabling grace of God one's nature is entirely transformed, renewed, sanctified.

#### III. *Lesson Suggestions:*

a. Civil authority asserting itself in revolutionary right should receive a Christian's support.

b. No human government has the right to command what the law of God has forbidden.

c. When civil authority directs one way, as in rare instances it has done, and Divine authority opposes, "men ought to obey God rather than man," and take the consequences—such is real martyrdom.

d. Political socialism is without warrant, or even recognition, in the administration of heaven.

# INTRODUCTION TO THE LESSONS OF THE THIRD AND FOURTH QUARTERS.

## I. General View of the Period.

The lessons of the Third and Fourth Quarters relate to the history of what is known as "the Golden Age of Israel," the eighty years from the accession of David to the death of Solomon. They present to us the remarkable progress in the Twelve Tribes, by which, in the compass of a single reign, the boundaries of Israel were extended twentyfold, and an empire founded which rivaled those of Assyria and Babylon in power. On the death of Saul, the first king, Israel was left in a helpless, divided, hopeless condition. The Philistines, not content with their hereditary possessions along the coast plain, had climbed the mountains and made themselves masters of the strongholds, and reduced Israel to a state of subjection. The Twelve Tribes were disorganized, for, added to the rivalry of Judah and Ephraim, was the fact of two kingdoms, one under Abner, Saul's uncle, the general and statesman of his age, who had set up Ishbosheth, Saul's son, as a puppet-king at Mahanaim, east of the Jordan; while David was recognized as king by the tribe of Judah. After seven years of civil strife Ishbosheth's tottering throne fell, and all Israel recognized David as its rightful sovereign. At once began an era of conquest. David's first work was the subjugation of his own territory, in which the most important fortresses were garrisoned by the Philistines, the Canaanites, and the Jebusites. He took the height of Zion from the Jebusites, and made it his capital under the new name of Jerusalem. Under its walls he twice discomfited the Philistines, and then followed up his victory by taking Gath, their capital. He made all the lowlands, both by the Mediterranean and in the Jordan valley, submit to his rule. He conquered the lands on the frontier—Moab, Ammon, and Syria—until at last the boundaries of his empire reached the full extent of the promise to Joshua four centuries before, "from the river of Egypt even unto the great river, the river Euphrates." This great kingdom he organized, consolidated, and transmitted to his son Solomon, who reigned over it in peace for forty years. There were shadows to the bright picture, in the sins of David and Solomon, the rivalries in the court and the harem, the oppressions of the people; yet this was undoubtedly the age when Israel was at its best estate, both with regard to the extent of its dominion, the organization of its government, the purity of its worship, and the religious character of its people.

## II. Literature of the Epoch.

The age of David and Solomon was a period of great activity in Hebrew literature. The order of prophets had been instituted by Samuel in the generation preceding; and to that order David himself, as well as Gad and Nathan, belonged. The

prophets were not only inspired teachers, but conservators of the literature already written, and authors of many books. The Law of Moses now received attention, after its long neglect during the period of the Judges; was arranged into something like its present shape from earlier documents, and began to be the subject of study. The books of Samuel were probably completed from the writings of the last of the Judges; and many of the Psalms were written by David, partly from the breathing of his poetic nature in his varied circumstances, partly as songs for the services of the sanctuary on Zion and the temple on Moriah. The books to which the lessons of these two quarters belong are 2 Samuel, 1 Kings, 1 Chronicles, Psalms, Proverbs, and Ecclesiastes.

## III. The Lessons.

Having taken a general view, let us notice some of the most important events of the history as contained in the lessons.

1. Connected with the accession and earlier portion of David's reign are Lessons I, II, III, IV, of the Third Quarter. In these we see David, after seven years of rule over Judah, crowned king of all Israel, subjecting his dominion, providing for the worship of God, and showing kindness to the fallen house of Saul. At this time his throne was at its height of power and glory.

2. Suddenly a cloud gathers over the scene, and in Lessons V, VI, VII, VIII, we see David sinning and suffering. There is the cry of penitence for guilt before God; there is the sad story of Absalom's wickedness and fate; there is the account of the pestilence which followed the attempt to "number the people." These lessons show us the sad results of sin, but, with these, the mercy of God.

3. The last four lessons of the Third Quarter are from the Psalms. They are of uncertain date, but have been referred, without authority of Scripture, to events in the life of David, by whose pen most, if not all, these particular psalms were written.

4. The first three lessons of the Fourth Quarter belong to the opening of Solomon's reign and relate the events leading to and connected with his accession, about B. C. 1015.

5. Then follow Lessons IV, V, VI, with an account of the great work of Solomon's reign, the building of the temple, and the visit of the Queen of Sheba.

6. Lesson VII, Fourth Quarter, stands alone as the record of Solomon's sin, the shameful fall of one who enjoyed rare privilege of knowledge and opportunity.

7. The last five lessons of the year are taken from the writings of Solomon, the Proverbs, and the Book of Ecclesiastes. The Proverbs are mainly the work of Solomon; but the opinions of critics differ as to the authorship of Ecclesiastes, some regarding it as the work of a later writer.

## THIRD QUARTER.

## THREE MONTHS WITH DAVID AND THE PSALMS.

B. C. 1046.]

## LESSON I.

[July 6.

DAVID KING OVER ALL ISRAEL.—2 Sam. 5. 1-12.

**GOLDEN TEXT.**—I have found David my servant, with my holy oil have I anointed him.  
—PSA. 89. 20.

TIME.—B. C., 1046.

PLACES.—Hebron, in the tribe of Judah, and Jerusalem.

INTRODUCTION.—On the death of Saul at the battle of Mount Gilboa, B. C. 1055, the tribe of Judah made David their king. But Abner, Saul's uncle, a man of great statesmanship and vigor, established himself with the remnant of Saul's family at Mahanaim, on the east of the Jordan, and there set up Ishbosheth, Saul's son, as nominal king. Gradually the tribes gathered around him, until finally nearly all, except Judah, recognized his authority. War arose between the two segments of the kingdom, resulting in the growing power of David and the decline of Abner's influence. At length, both Abner and Ishbosheth were murdered, and then the events of this lesson began.—*J. L. H.* The consummation to which events in God's providence had been leading was now come. Saul and Jonathan, Abner and Ishbosheth, were all dead; there was no one of the house of Saul capable of taking the lead; David was already head of a very large portion of Israel; the Philistines, and perhaps the remnant of the Canaanites, were restless and threatening; and it was obviously the interest of the Israelitish nation to unite themselves under the sovereignty of the valiant and virtuous son of Jesse, their former deliverer, and the man designated by the word of God as their captain and shepherd. Accordingly he was at once anointed king over all Israel.—*Bishop Hervey.* Nothing could be more propitious than the dawn of the new reign. All the tribes were finally united as a nation, the various parties among them reconciled, and the popular desires in the way of realization. David stood before all as king by their own choice, and thus the principle had been asserted that the crown of Israel was no mere hereditary appanage of a family, but the gift of the people freely assembled to him who, by his evident fitness, showed that he had an inner and higher calling to assume it. Would David keep to his coronation oath? Would he fulfill their expectations? They did not need to wait long to be able to decide respecting this. His genius and statesmanship were seen in his first step.—*C. Geikie.*

1 Then <sup>1</sup> came all the tribes of Is'ra-el to Da'vid unto He'bron, and spake, say- ing, Behold, <sup>2</sup> we are thy bone and thy flesh.

<sup>1</sup> 1 Chron. 12. 23.<sup>2</sup> Gen. 29. 14.

1. Then—We hold that David was not recognized as king by all Israel immediately after the death of Ishbosheth. The connective *then*, with which this chapter begins, does not always imply immediate sequence, (Exod. 2. 2,) but may pass over an interval of years whose history it was not the purpose of the writer to record. If all the Israelites were confounded at the assassination of Abner, (chap. 4. 1,) the alarm and astonishment were not likely to grow less with the similar death of Saul's son, and it is every way probable that several years were allowed to pass before all the tribes agreed to submit to David.—*M. S. Terry.* All the tribes of Israel—The "congregation of Israel," or national assembly, composed of all the warriors of the nation above the age of twenty who

chose to come, met to elect David king.—*Cambridge Bible.* Hebron (*Friendship*).—An ancient town of Palestine, about twenty miles south of Jerusalem, and the same distance north of Beersheba, first called Kirjath-arba, or "city of Arba," the father of Anak. Josh. 21. 11; 15. 13, 14; Judges 1. 10. It lies about three thousand feet above the level of the sea, and is one of the oldest towns in the world. The town has many spacious houses built of stone, and numbers about ten thousand souls, including five hundred Jews, but there is not a single Christian family there. The city is divided into several quarters, in one of which is the great mosque, a massive structure about two hundred by one hundred and fifty feet on the ground and nearly fifty feet high, with two

2 Also in time past, when Saul was king over us, thou wast he that leddest out and broughtest in Is'ra-el: and the Lord said to thee, Thou shalt feed my people Is'ra-el, and thou shalt be a captain over Is'ra-el.

3 So all the elders of Is'ra-el came to the king to He'bron; and king Da'vid made a league with them in He'bron before the Lord; and they anointed Da'vid king over Is'ra-el.

4 Da'vid was thirty years old when he

\* 1 Sam. 16. 13.—† 1 Sam. 16. 1. chap. 7. 7; Psa. 78. 71.

\* 1 Chron. 11. 3.—\* 2 Kings 11. 17. † Judg. 11. 11; 1 Sam. 23. 18.

minarets. This mosque is known to conceal the noted cave of Machpelah, the burial-place of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and their wives except Rachel. The mosque is closed against visitors, and guarded with the strictest care by the Moslems.—*Schaff*. **And spake**—Three reasons, arranged in the order of their importance, are given for electing David king: the tie of relationship, his proved capacity as a military leader, the Divine choice. The first and third correspond to the precept of Deut. 17. 15; with the second compare chap. 3. 17.—*Cambridge Bible*. **Thy bone and thy flesh**—Thy blood relations, for we are all descended from Jacob, our common father.—*Terry*. So all Israel say to David; and so, as Paul teaches, the Church may say to Christ, (see Eph. 5. 30.) "for we are of his flesh and of his bones," and, by his exaltation to the heavenly Jerusalem, is made king over all true Israelites, and is become our second Adam in glory, joining to himself a universal Eve from all nations.—*Wordsworth*.

2. **Thou wast he that leddest**—David possessed the first and indispensable qualification for the throne, namely, that of being an Israelite, (Deut. 17. 15;) of his military talent he had furnished ample proof, and the people's desire for his assumption of the government of Israel was further increased by their knowledge of the will and purpose of God, as declared by Samuel. 1 Sam. 16. 11-13.—*R. Jamieson*. **The Lord said**—This prophecy, like that of chap. 3. 18, is nowhere else recorded, but had probably been uttered by one of the prophets of that age.—*Terry*. **Thou shalt feed**—Literally, "thou shalt shepherd." This is the first time we find a governor described in Scripture as pastor of the people; afterward the name is much used by the prophets, particularly Ezekiel (34. 23,) and many other places. Whence our Lord Christ is called "the Good Shepherd," and "the Great Shepherd."—*Erdmann*.

He that is faithful in a little deserves to be trusted with more. Former good offices done for us should be gratefully remembered by us when there is occasion.—*M. Henry*.

3. **All the elders of Israel**—From verse 1,

and 1 Chron. 12. 23-46, it is evident that a general assembly of the nation, and not merely a few delegates, met at Hebron; here the *elders* are particularly specified because they acted as the representatives of the people in negotiating with David. **Made a league**—This "league" was probably a solemn contract in which the king on the one hand engaged to rule according to the laws, and the people on the other hand promised him their allegiance. Some kind of a charter, defining the king's rights, was in existence, (1 Sam. 10. 25;) and later on we find the people demanding some limitation of these rights, 1 Kings 12. 3, ff. The Israelite monarchy was not an absolute and irresponsible despotism.—*Cambridge Bible*. **Before the Lord**—By a solemn appeal to Jehovah as witness of the vows they all took upon themselves. This whole transaction was done as if all realized that they were in the very presence of Jehovah.—*Terry*. Abiathar and Zadok, the priests, were both with David, and the tabernacle and altar may have been at Hebron, though the ark was at Kirjath-jearim.—*Bishop Hervey*. **Anointed David king**—David had already been anointed by Samuel, 1 Sam. 16. 13. But just as Saul was first secretly anointed by Samuel, (1 Sam. 10. 1,) and afterward made king by all the people at Gilgal, (chap. 11. 14, 15,) so it was with David. His first anointing indicated God's secret purpose, his second the accomplishment of that purpose. The interval between the anointing of the Lord Jesus as the Christ of God, and his taking to himself his kingdom and glory, seem to be thus typified. David was anointed again king over Israel. Chap. 5. 3.—*Bishop Hervey*. The Book of Chronicles contains further interesting details about this assembly at Hebron. 1 Chron. 12. 23-40. The numbers of fighting men sent by each tribe are preserved, amounting to a total of nearly 350,000. Stress is laid on the unanimity of feeling, and the general rejoicing with which David's anointing was celebrated in a three days' festival.—*Cambridge Bible*.

4. **Thirty years old**—The prime of life; the age at which the Levites entered upon their duties, (Num. 4. 3;) at which young men com-

began to reign; <sup>8</sup>and he reigned forty years.

5 In He'bron he reigned over Ju'dah <sup>9</sup>seven years and six months; and in Je-ru'sa lem he reigned thirty and three years over all Is'ra-el and Ju'dah.

6 And the king and his men went <sup>10</sup>to Je-ru'sa-lem unto <sup>11</sup>the Jeb'u-sites, the

inhabitants of the land; which spake unto Da'vid, saying, Except thou take away the blind and the lame, thou shalt not come in hither: <sup>12</sup>thinking, Da'vid cannot come in hither.

7 Nevertheless Da'vid took the strong hold of Zi'on: the same is the city of Da'vid.

<sup>8</sup> 1 Chron. 26. 31, 29. 27.—<sup>9</sup> 1 Chron. 3. 4.—<sup>10</sup> Judg. 1. 21.

<sup>11</sup> Josh. 15. 63; Judg. 19. 11.—<sup>12</sup> Or, saying, David shall not, etc

menced to take part in public business in Greece; at which Joseph was made ruler over Egypt, (Gen. 41. 46;) at which Jesus Christ was "anointed with the Holy Ghost" in his baptism, and began his public ministry. Luke 3. 23.—*Cambridge Bible*. If David was twenty years old at the time he slew Goliath, four years in Saul's service, four years of wandering from place to place, one year and four months in the country of the Philistines, a few months after Saul's death would make up the ten years necessary to bring him to the age of thirty.—*Bishop Hervey*.

6. **The king**—David, now ruler over all the tribes. **His men**—The soldiers, many of whom had followed David through all his years of exile. **To Jerusalem**—Political, civil, and military considerations pointed to Jerusalem as the most suitable capital for the united kingdom. (a) Its position within the territory of Benjamin, yet close upon the borders of Judah, (or, as some think, and as may be indicated by the passage quoted above, partly in one tribe, partly in the other,) was excellently adapted for binding together the two royal tribes, and conciliating the good-will of Benjamin without alienating Judah. (b) Its situation was virtually central not only with regard to these two great tribes, but for the whole land. "It was on the ridge of the backbone of hills which extended through the whole country from the desert to the plain of Esdraelon. Every traveler who has trod the central route of Palestine from north to south must have passed through the table-land of Jerusalem."—Stanley's "Sinai and Palestine," p. 176. (c) As a military post it was unrivaled. It stood on a rocky plateau, surrounded on three sides by deep ravines forming a natural fortress of almost impregnable strength.—*Cambridge Bible*. **The Jebusites**—An ancient tribe descended from Canaan, son of Ham, (Gen. 10. 16,) who from the days of Abraham had been well-known inhabitants of the land. They were a most hardy and warlike tribe, as is shown from their ability to maintain their ancient position in Central Palestine so long.—*Terry*. Which

spake unto David—Having first proposed its peaceable surrender, perhaps in return for payment of money, he received only an insulting refusal.—*C. Geikie*. **The blind and the lame**—The passage should be rendered thus: "and (the Jebusite) spake to David, saying, Thou shalt not come hither, but the blind and the lame shall keep thee off," that is, so far shalt thou be from taking the stronghold from us that the lame and the blind shall suffice to defend the place.—*Bishop Hervey*. To understand the full meaning and force of this insulting taunt, it is necessary to bear in mind the depth and steepness of the valley of Gihon, and the lofty walls of the ancient Canaanitish fortress.—*R. Jamieson*. **Thinking**—Hebrew, *Saying*. This word either explains the purport of the saying of the Jebusites, just recorded, or, which is simpler, indicates the words with which the blind and the lame accompany their resistance, "David shall not come here."—*Bishop Hervey*. The enemies of God's people are often very confident of their own strength, and most secure when their day to fall draws nigh.—*M. Henry*.

7. **Nevertheless**—Overcoming the precipitous cliffs and the battlements above them guarded by the Jebusites. **Stronghold of Zion**—This was probably the height between the valley of Tyropæon on the west, and Hinnom on the south. It stands above the level of the temple mountain, Moriah, and contains the so-called tomb of David. **City of David**—So named because it was first the conquest, then the residence, and finally the tomb, of the great chieftain and king. The natural features of the site of Jerusalem are briefly as follows: The plateau on which the city stands is inclosed on three sides by deep ravines, on the east by the Valley of the Kidron, dividing the Temple Mount from the Mount of Olives; on the west and south by the Valley of Hinnom. It was, originally divided by another valley, called by Josephus the Tyropæon Valley, now in great part filled up with debris, which extended northward from a point near the junction of the Valley of Hinnom, with the Kidron, and sep-



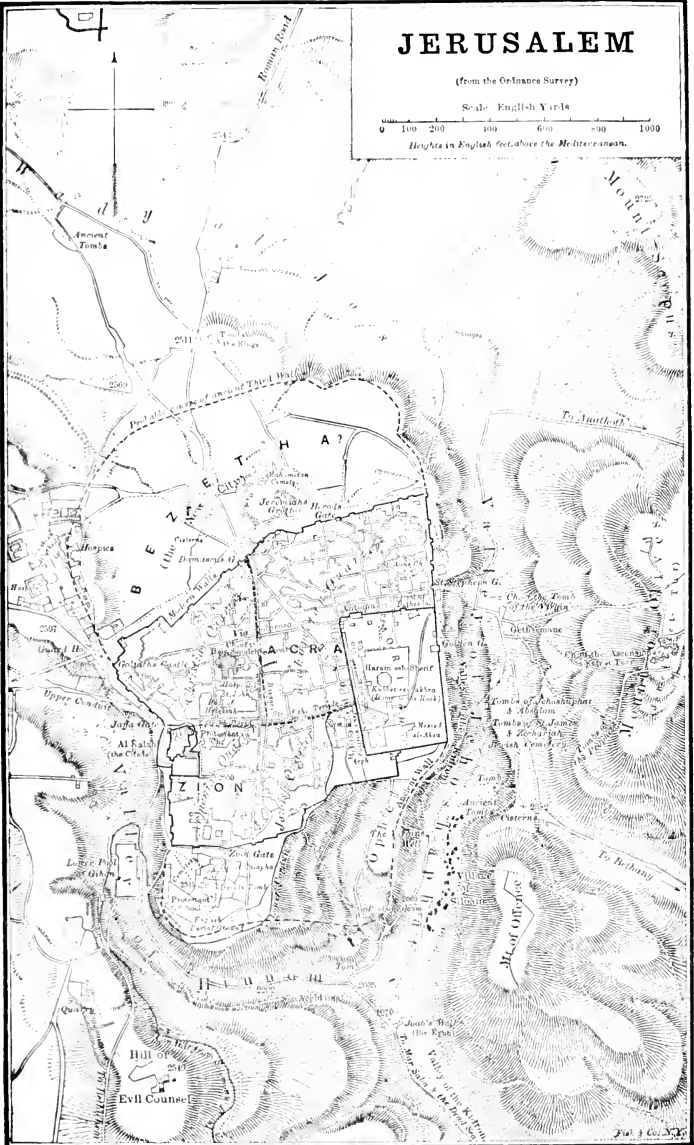
# JERUSALEM

(from the Ordnance Survey)

Scale English Yards

0 100 200 300 400 500 600 700 800 900 1000

Heights in English feet above the Mediterranean.



8 And Da'vid said on that day, Whosoever getteth up to the gutter, and smiteth the Jeb'u-sites, and the lame and the blind, *that are hated of Da'vid's soul,* <sup>12</sup> *he shall be chief and captain.* <sup>8</sup> Wherefore they said, The blind and

the lame shall not come into the house.

9 So Da'vid dwelt in the fort, and called it, The city of Da'vid: and Da'vid built round about <sup>13</sup> from Mil'lo and inward.

<sup>12</sup> 1 Chron. 11. 6. — *b* Or, Because they had said, even the blind 9. 24;

and the lame, He shall not come into the house. — <sup>13</sup> 1 Kings 11. 27.

arated into two branches, one running west the other north-west. "The ancient site thus consisted of three principal hills, to east, north-west, and south-west separated by deep valleys."—*Cambridge Bible*. According to an uncontradicted tradition of centuries past, the stronghold of Zion occupied the south-western hill of the modern city, which overhangs the deep valley of Hinnom. This valley guarded it on the west and south, while its northern and eastern defense was the Tyropæon Valley.—*M. S. Terry*.

8. David said — In order to encourage his followers to boldness in the difficult attack by storm upon the fortress. **Getteth up to the gutter**—Literally, "to the water-spouts." Probably a term then well understood, referring to the summit of the walls above the precipice. Dr. Terry's note is as follows: The whole verse is obscure, and appears to be an abridged and broken transcription from a fuller document. Our translators have attempted to amend the passage by comparison with its parallel in 1 Chron. 11. 6. The word here rendered *gutter* is rendered *water-spout* in Psa. 42. 7. Gesenius and Keil render it *cataract*. According to Fürst, it means a *hollow passage, a water conduit*. Adopting the last signification, we refer it to the deep hollow beneath the citadel and translate thus: *Every one smiting a Jebusite, let him thrust (him) into the gulf, (beneath,) both the lame and the blind, (who) hated the soul of David.*—*M. S. Terry*. **He shall be chief**—Promising the great reward of the chief command of his forces to him who should take it, a storming party clambered up the precipice, overpowered the defenders above in spite of all opposition; Joab, the man whom of all others David would have kept back, winning the honors of the attack.—*C. Geikie*. The sense is complete (as Bishop Patrick has observed) without the addition of the words in the Authorized Version, "he shall be chief and captain," which are indeed true, being found in 1 Chron. 11. 6, but ought not to be inserted here.—*Wordsworth*. Ewald translates the passage metrically, thus:

Whoso shall conquer the Jebusite,  
Let him hurl down from the cliff  
The lame and the blind together,  
Hated of David's soul.

**Wherefore they said**—Instead of saying, We wont have any disagreeable people in the house, they said, The blind and the lame, etc. This proverbial use of David's words is an instance of the affection of the people for David, and is recorded as such.—*Bishop Hervey*. **Into the house**—Some (Bunsen, Thenius,) understand by this *the temple*, and assume (with reference to Acts 3. 2; John 9. 1; 8. 59) an old law, forbidding the blind and the lame to enter the temple, which law the narrator derives from this incident.—*Erdmann*.

9. **The fort**—The same word in the Hebrew as that rendered *stronghold*. Ver. 7. **David built round about**—Probably meaning built his own house, and other houses and streets, all, in short, that caused it to be called *the city of David*, which it would not have been called if it had not been inhabited.—*Bishop Hervey*. **From Millo**—Millo was a fortress or rampart of ancient Zion, apparently so-called from having been *filled in* with earth and stones. The article connected with the Hebrew word serves to designate it as some well-known fortress, and it was evidently a noted stronghold before the city was occupied by David. It was afterward built up again and strengthened by Solomon, (1 Kings 9. 15, 24; 11. 27,) and later still by Hezekiah. 2 Chron. 32. 5. It seems to have been situated on the northern side of Zion, where the natural defenses were less strong than on the other sides; and from it, as a bulwark, David built all round the northern side a strong wall, and fortified it inward toward the south, so as to make it more secure against assault than it had ever been before.—*M. S. Terry*. **And inward**—Within or under the protection of the Millo, which was the outermost defense of the city. What became of the inhabitants we are not told. But apparently they were in great part left undisturbed. A powerful Jebusite chief, probably the king, with his four sons, lived on property of his

10 And Da'vid 'went on, and grew great, and the LORD God of hosts *was* with him.

11 And <sup>c</sup>Hiram king of Tyre

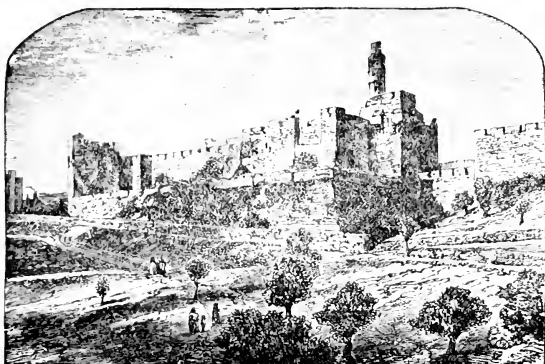
<sup>c</sup>Went going and growing.—<sup>d</sup>1 Kings 5, 2;

own immediately outside the walls.—*Dean Stanley.*

sent messengers to Da'vid, and cedar trees, and carpenters, and masons: and they built Da'vid an house.

1 Chron. 14. 1.—<sup>d</sup>Hewers of the stone of the wall.

(1 Kings 5. 10, *sqq.*; 2 Chron. 2. 2, *sqq.*) and fitted out a mercantile fleet in conjunction with



The Castle of David.

10. David went on, and grew—The marginal reading of this text is remarkable: and “David went going and growing.” Some people go who do not grow; and some are growing who are not going on. Some have both these with whom God is not. But all meet in David. In him we see activity, increase, and heavenly benediction.—*J. C. Gray.* **The Lord God of hosts**—A title of the Almighty expressive of his command over “the armies” of the created universe. **Was with him**—Observe (1) how this is referred to the highest source, not merely to God’s assistance, but to the fact that God *was with him*, and (2) how God is in this connection called the *God of hosts*.—*Erdmann.*

11. And—It is probable that the historian to some extent forsakes chronological order, and places the account of David’s palace-building and of his family here by anticipation in proof of the statement of verse 10.—*Cambridge Bible.*

**Hiram**—(*Hiram* in 1 Kings 5. 12; *Hiram* in the Chronicles.) King of Tyre, was not only an ally of David, but of his son Solomon also. He sent to the latter cedar-wood and builders for the erection of the temple and of his own palace,

him, (1 Kings 9. 27, 28; 2 Chron. 9. 10,) in return for which Solomon not only sent him an annual supply of corn, oil, and wine, (1 Kings 5. 11; 2 Chron. 2. 10,) but when all the buildings were finished, twenty years after the erection of the temple, he made over to him twenty of the towns of Galilee. 1 Kings 9. 10, *sqq.*—*Keil and Delitzsch.* **Tyre**—One of the two great cities of Phenicia, celebrated for its commerce, its mechanical skill, and its wealth. Three causes co-operated to bring Phenicia into close and friendly relation with Israel: (a) The contiguity of the countries, and the short distance between their capitals. From Tyre to Jerusalem by land was scarcely more than one hundred miles, so that intercourse was easy. (b) Similarity of language. Phenician so closely resembles Hebrew that it must have been readily intelligible to the Israelites. (c) Tyre depended upon Palestine for its supplies of wheat and oil, and in return sent to Jerusalem its articles of commerce, and provided skilled workmen for the buildings erected by David and Solomon.—*Cambridge Bible.* **Sent messengers**—The news of the capture of the city of the Jebusites had doubt-

12 And Da'vid perceived that the LORD had establish him king over Is'ra-

el, and that he had exalted his kingdom<sup>16</sup> for his people Is'ra-el's sake.

<sup>16</sup> Isa.

45. 4.

less reached Tyre, and created a great impression of David's power.—*Bishop Hervey*. Cedar trees—Felled, no doubt, in the forests of Lebanon, and brought by sea to Joppa. The cedar was the prince of trees, (Psa. 104. 16,) the emblem of strength and stature and grandeur. Psa. 92. 12; Amos 2. 9; Ezek. 31. 3. Its timber was highly prized for building on account of its durability. Other species of pine besides the well-known cedar of Lebanon were probably included under the general term *cedar*. Carpenters and masons—The influx of Tyrian architects and mechanics affords a clear evidence of the low state to which, through the disorders of long-continued war, the better class of artisans had declined in Israel.—*R. Jamieson*. They built David a house—Psa. 30, which is entitled "A Song at the Dedication of the House," may possibly have been written to celebrate the completion of this palace. If so, David had just recovered from a severe illness concerning which history is silent.—*Cambridge Bible*.

Many have excelled in arts and sciences who were strangers to the covenants of promise, yet David's house was never the worse nor the less fit to be dedicated to God for its being built by the sons of the stranger: it is prophesied of the Gospel Church.—*M. Henry*.

12. David perceived—He was convinced by the signal providences attending his own personal history, and the strength and honor of his kingdom, that his prosperity was of the Lord. How strong is he whose growing greatness is enhanced by the consciousness of Jehovah's favor!—*M. S. Terry*. That the Lord had established him—The strength and liveliness of his conviction arose from the number of conspiring accidents, often seemingly cross accidents, which had led him into so new and dangerous a position. It was the successiveness, the continuity, of the steps in his history, which assured him that God's hand had been directing the whole of it.—*F. D. Maurice*. For his people Israel's sake—David's ways were not always right, yet for *Israel's sake*, and for his own great name's sake, Jehovah blessed him. Marvelous was God's favor and regard for his chosen people.—*M. S. Terry*.

#### Authorities to be Consulted.

Geikie's Hours with the Bible, vol. 3, chap. viii. Maurice's Prophets and Kings, lecture 4. Milman's History of the Jews, vol. i, book 7.

Kitto's Daily Bible Illustrations, 36th week, Friday. Stanley's History of the Jewish Church, vol. ii, lecture 33. Freeman's Manners and Customs, 250. Bible Educator, iii, 129; iv, 287, 288. David the King, by Dr. Wm. M. Taylor; also by Rev. C. E. Knox, On the City of Jerusalem. See Stanley's Sinai and Palestine, chap. iii. Barclay's City of the Great King. Robinson's Researches. Ridgway's The Lord's Land, etc. Foster's Cyclopaedia of Illustrations, [numbers marked with a star refer to poetical quotations.] ver. 3: \*3302; 10: 631, 2711; 12: 7734.

#### Practical Thoughts.

##### HOW GOD'S LEADERS WIN SUCCESS.

1. God's leaders win success by patiently waiting, leaving, as David did, the results of his life in the hands of God. Ver. 1.
2. God's leaders win success by the promises of God made to them and realized in them. Ver. 2.
3. God's leaders win success by the evident tokens of capacity and ability which they show. Ver. 2.
4. God's leaders win success by a spirit of friendliness, willing to make sacrifices of personal power for the general good. Ver. 3.
5. God's leaders win success by their foresight in plan and their energy in execution of great enterprises. Vers. 6-8.
6. God's leaders win success by God's help, on which they rely. Ver. 10.
7. God's leaders win success through the insight of faith, perceiving God's hand in their lives. Ver. 12.

#### Sermon Outline.

REV. A. N. CRAFT, D.D.

*Introduction.* Human history is not a storm which no hand guides. God cannot, consistently with man's moral freedom, prevent the existence of sin, but he can and does so overrule the moral conflicts of the world that evil will be driven back to its narrowest possible limits.

1. A fallible man may be used as an instrument for working out the plans of an infallible Providence. A sinner must be chosen out of a race of sinners whose subsequent life will not be stainless. The Bible presents only one model life.

2. Providence selects the right man for the right place. When Abel falls Enoch arises. Noah, Abraham, and Moses were brought forth by Providence just at the time when crises in history demanded them. Who better than Joshua after Moses, than

Samson and Samuel in the period of the Judges, than David after Saul? One whom God has chosen for a work, like Saul, may prove false to his trust, but God has yet another servant to take his place. Luther possessed a natural temperament which adapted him to hurl back the anathemas of the Pope. David possessed courage, warmth of emotion, depth of spiritual insight, and other qualities, trained by severe discipline, which made him adapted to the work to which God called him. There must be an adaptation between a man and his work. It is a misfortune, to which the reading public has to submit too frequently in these days, that newspaper editors whose natural qualifications and previous discipline prepare them to serve as news-gatherers, and to discuss political issues, drop into theology, and, at a moment's notice, on weighty biblical themes which require previous preparation of thought and prayerful investigation, will write editorials with a flying lead-pencil while the press is waiting and the printers are calling for more copy.

But natural qualifications and personal effort alone are not sufficient for a great and successful career. A great crisis must come, and at the right time. If David had been born earlier or later we

would not have had David's career, but in a humbler lot he would have been David still. There are more kings than conspicuous thrones. But those who live in obscurity because no great crisis has called them forth can find employment for all their powers in the common walks of life. To rear a wayward boy for heaven is not less difficult than to lead an army.

Providential oversight of human affairs is not confined to conspicuous events, because the great events are built upon the smaller ones in which we all take part.

3. *An Analogy.* Analogies are grounded on the nature of God, whose unity of nature must be reflected in a corresponding unity in the methods of his providence. We, like David, were sought out by the blood, and anointed with his holy oil, while yet in early youth. At first we were called upon to do but little more than to make music for those who had "an evil spirit." Afterward we fought with sins as with Philistines, and were pursued by spiritual foes within the borders of Zion as by Saul. Though we are kings we have a long conflict before us before we gain our crowns. They who reign with Christ are warrior kings who have fought the good fight of faith.

## THE ARK IN THE HOUSE.—2 SAM. 6. 1-12.

GOLDEN TEXT.—He blesseth the habitation of the just.—PROV. 3. 33.

TIME.—B. C. 1042.

PLACES.—Jerusalem and Baale, or Kirjath-jearim, in the tribe of Judah.

CONNECTING LINK.—War with the Philistines. 2 Sam. 5. 17-25.

INTRODUCTION.—Having smitten his enemies and fortified Mount Zion, and having for a time rest from war, David most judiciously took measures to make the capital of his kingdom the central place of worship for all the tribes. He doubtless knew Jehovah's promise to choose out of all the tribes a place to put his name, (Deut. 12. 5, 11,) and the signal providences that had given him possession of Zion convinced him that this was the chosen city. It was manifestly important, therefore, that the ark of the covenant, the most sacred of all the shrines of the sanctuary, be brought with appropriate ceremonies from its obscurity in Kirjath-jearim, and placed in the city of the king. The parallel account of this event in 1 Chron. 13, 15, and 16, is more elaborately drawn. For this grand occasion David probably composed Psalm 24.—*M. S. Terry.* But why did he not also bring the tabernacle into Jerusalem, and place the ark in it? The reason is perhaps to be found in the double high-priesthood which had arisen during the latter years of Saul's reign. Abiathar officiated in David's camp; Zadok, it would seem, ministered at Gibeon, whither the tabernacle was removed, in all probability, after Saul's massacre of the priests at Nob. For the present David may have found it wisest to recognize the two priests as of equal authority, and to acquiesce in the separation of the tabernacle and the ark, allowing Zadok to continue the sacrificial service at Gibeon, (1 Chron. 16. 40,) while he established another service in Jerusalem before the ark. 1 Chron. 16. 37.—*Cambridge Bible.*

1 Again, Da'vid gathered together all the chosen men of Is'ra-el, thirty thousand.

1. Again—"Again" refers either to the assembly convened for David's coronation, (chap. 5. 1-3,) or to the muster for the Philistine war recorded in the verses immediately preceding. Chap. 5. 17-25.—*Cambridge Bible.* Gathered

together—The object of this second assembly was to commence a national movement for establishing the ark in Jerusalem, after it had continued nearly fifty years in the house of Abinadab. See 1 Chron. 13. 1-5.—*R. Jamieson.*

2 And 'Da'vid arose, and went with all the people that were with him from a Ba'a-le of Ju'dah, to bring up from

<sup>1</sup> 1 Chron. 13. 5.—a Or, Baalah, that is, Kirjath-jearim. Josh. 15. 9. Or hosts, was called upon.—

**All the chosen men**—According to 1 Chron. 13. 1-5, David took counsel in this matter with all the chief men, and then “gathered all Israel together from Shihor of Egypt, even unto the entering of Hemath.” The expression *all Israel* often stands for the representatives or chosen men from all the tribes, who in the present instance numbered thirty thousand.—*M. S. Terry*. David associates the priests and the Levites and people throughout all Israel with himself in this work of religious joy and exultation. The universal Church of Christ partakes with the divine David in the glory of his ascension into the heavenly Zion. Eph. 2. 6.—*Wordsworth*.

Our divine David himself is gone up to the heavenly Jerusalem by a glorious ascension, and by that ascension his members are already there *in hope*. But the progress of the ark of his Church to that glorious altitude is a weary pilgrimage by a steep and rugged way, attended by many sorrows, trials, and imperfections. It is not without much tribulation that the Church militant can arise to the glory of the Church triumphant.—*Wordsworth*.

David will not endure himself glorious and the ark of God contemptible; his first care is to provide a fit room for God in the head of the tribes, in his own city. The chief care of good princes must be the advancement of religion. What should the deputies of God rather do, than honor him whom they represent?—*Bishop Hall*.

2. All the people that were with him—These are not the above-named thirty thousand chosen warriors but, besides them, the representatives of the whole nation gathered to the festival, as described in 1 Chron. 13. 1-16, where nothing is said of a military body.—*Erdmann*. From Baale—The journey to Baale, which is related 1 Chron. 13. 6, is here presupposed, and the historian describes the course



of the procession from that place to the capital.—*R. Jamieson*. Baale of Judah—From what follows “Baale-Judah” can be nothing but the place Kirjath-jearim (comp. 1 Chron. 13. 6) whither the ark was carried according to 1 Sam. 6. 21; 7. 1 = Kirjath-

thence the ark of God, <sup>6</sup> whose name is called by the name of The LORD of hosts, that <sup>2</sup> dwelleth between the cherubim.

15. 9.—<sup>6</sup> Or, at which the name, even the name of the LORD of hosts, was called upon. 21 Sam. 4. 4; Psa. 80. 1.

*baul*, Josh. 15. 60; 18. 14; *Baalah*, Josh. 15. 9; 1 Chron. 13. 6. This original Canaanitish name continued along with the Israelitish. It lay on the border between Judah and Benjamin, westward on the border of the latter tribe, and about eight miles west of Jerusalem, identified by Robinson with the modern Kur-yet el-Enab, or Abu Gosh, on the road from Jerusalem to Jaffa.—*Erdmann*. **The ark of God**—This was a chest about four feet long by two feet and a half wide and deep, made of shittim or acacia wood, plated with gold on the outside and the inside. It contained the two sacred stone tablets on which God wrote the ten commandments. Its lid was of gold, and was called the *propitiatory*, incorrectly translated *mercy-seat*, being the place where God manifested his presence to his people. It was the most sacred article in the furniture of the tabernacle, and was kept in the Holy of Holies. **Whose name is called**—The ark is specially said to be “called by the name of Je-



Ark and Priests.

hovah of hosts,” because it was the symbol of the covenant between Jehovah and Israel, and because it was the place where he chiefly chose to manifest himself by visible tokens to his people.—*Cambridge Bible*. Rather, as De Wette, Keil, and others translate, *Over which is called the name, the name of Jehovah of hosts*. The repetition of the word *name* intensifies the thought of the personal presence of Jehovah

3 And they set the ark of God upon a new cart, and brought it out of the house of A-bin'a-dab that was in Gibe-ah: and Uz'zah and A-hi'o, the sons of A-bin'a-dab, drove the new cart.

4 And they brought it out of the house of A-bin'a-dab which was at Gibe-

*e* Made to ride.—3 Num. 7. 9.

over the mercy-seat. — *M. S. Terry.* By the name of the Lord—the name of God denotes all the operations of God through which he attests his personal presence in that relation into which he has entered to man; that is, the whole of the divine self-manifestation, or of that side of the divine nature which is turned toward men.—*Oehler.* Between the cherubim—According to the primitive conception, the cherubim were the bearers of God when he appeared in his glory upon the earth, (Psa. 18. 10;) so, in Ezekiel's vision, they carry the throne of God. Ezek. 11. 22; comp. 1. 19; 10. 16, ff. They are the "wings of the wind" by which God in the thunder-cloud is borne to the world. Isa. 19. 1; Psa. 104. 3. Hence they are the witnesses of his presence: wherever they are God is. How appropriate, therefore, were representations of them placed in the tabernacle and table! In the former two golden cherubim stood in the Holy of Holies upon the mercy-seat. Exod. 37. 8. They were likewise pictured upon the curtains. Chap. 26. 1, 31; 36. 8, 35. In Solomon's temple two colossal figures of the cherubim, overlaid with gold, stood upon the floor and overshadowed the ark, which was between them in the Holy of Holies. 1 Kings 6. 27.—*Schaff.*

3. A new cart—Like that which the Philistine diviners ordered for the removal of this same ark from their coasts. 1 Sam. 6. 7. Strange carelessness on the part of the Israelites, amounting to sacrilege. The only lawful way to bear this holy shrine was by means of the staves extending through the rings on its sides. Exod. 25. 14.—*M. S. Terry.* That was in Gibeah—Rather, that was in the hills, as the margin and 1 Sam. 7. 1. Here the ark had stood in obscurity and neglect for more than sixty years.—*M. S. Terry.* The sons of Abinadab—It does not at all follow that Abinadab was still alive, nor can we conclude from Uz'zah and Ahio being called sons of Abinadab, that they were literally his children. They may well have been sons of Eleazar, and grandsons of Abinadab, or yet more remote descendants,

ah, accompanying the ark of God: and A-hi'o went before the ark.

5 And Da'vid and all the house of Is'ra-el played before the Lord on all manner of instruments made of fir wood, even on harps, and on psalteries, and on timbrels, and on cornets, and on cymbals.

*d* Or, The hill. 1 Sam. 7. 1.—*e* with.

since there is no distinct evidence that Abinadab was alive even when the ark was brought to Kirjath-jearim.—*Bishop Harey.* Drive the new cart—Even David himself, we see, was liable to the charge of negligence and forgetfulness in the manner of bringing up the ark; and his fault is not disguised by the sacred writer. He had imitated the Philistines, God's enemies, and had disobeyed God's law. David afterward recollected the error of which he had been guilty in this respect, and corrected it in the remainder of the progress of the ark to Jerusalem. See 1 Chron. 15. 2-15.—*Wordsworth.*

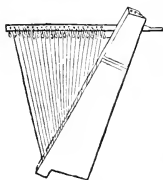
All religious reformations, which are wrought by men, are blemished by human infirmities. It is Christ only of whom it can be said, that "His work is perfect," in the intention, and in the act and in the mode of doing it.—*Wordsworth.*

4, 5. Ahio went before the ark—To guide the oxen, while Uz'zah, as appears afterward, walked behind, keeping his eyes upon the movements of the ark. These sons of Abinadab evidently lacked a becoming reverence for the ark. From childhood they had seen it in their home, and had become so familiar with the sight as to lose from their minds the sacred associations of its former history.—*M. S. Terry.* Played before the Lord—Danced, and sang, and played on the musical instruments here mentioned. Public joy must always be as before the Lord, with an eye to him, and terminating in him; and must not degenerate into that which is carnal and sensual.—*M. Henry.* On all manner of instruments made of fir wood. The expression is a strange one, and the text seems to be corrupt. Probably we should adopt the reading of the parallel passage in 1 Chron., with all their might and with songs. The Hebrew words are very similar, and the Septuagint text here, though interpolated in its present form, supports the change.—*Cambridge Bible.* Harps . . . psaltery . . . timbrels.—The probable forms of the psaltery, tabret, and pipe are shown

6 And when they came to *Nachon's* threshing-floor, *Uzzah* put forth his

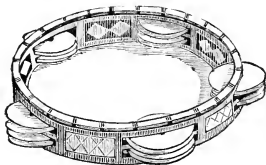
*f* Or, *Chidon*; 1 Chron. 13. 9; that is, Destroying

in the accompanying cut. The psaltery was a



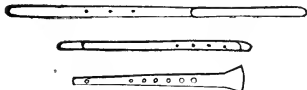
Psaltery.

*tra*; for the original Hebrew word occurs



Tabret.

here only, and seems clearly to mean the *sistrum*, an instrument of Egyptian origin; which was used by taking it in the right hand and



Pipes.

shaking it. The cornet was a sort of horn.—*M. S. Terry*. **Cymbals**—Instruments consisting of two convex pieces of metal, which, when struck together, made a loud, clanging sound.

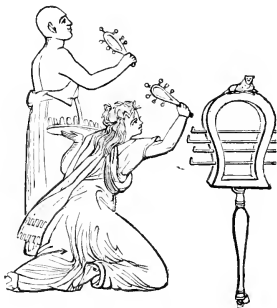
It is long since Israel saw so fair a day as this, wherein they went, in this holy triumph, to fetch the ark of God. Now their warlike trumpets are turned into harps and timbrels; and their hands, instead of wielding the sword and spear, strike upon those musical strings, whereby they might express the joy of their hearts; here was no noise but of mirth, no motion but pleasant. O happy Israel, that had a God to rejoice in! that had this occasion of rejoicing in their God, and a heart that embraced this occasion!—*Bishop Hall*.

6. **Nachon's threshing-floor**—In 1 Chron. 13. 9, it is called *Chidon's* threshing-floor. See the margin. How is this to be explained? Neither

hand to the ark of God, and took hold of it; for the oxen shook it.

stroke.—4 Num. 4. 15.—*g* Or, stumbled.

*Nachon* nor *Chidon* are in fact proper names. The words rendered "Nachon's threshing-floor" ought to be translated, the threshing-floor of



Cornet or Sistrum.

*smiting*, (from *nacah*, to smite,) so called from the event; because God there smote *Uzzah* (*Bochart, Keil*;) and the words, "*Chidon's* threshing-floor," ought probably to be translated, the threshing-floor of the dart, that is, of the *stroke* with which *Uzzah* was smitten.—*Wordsworth*. The familiar mention of such places, now utterly unknown, is evidence of the antiquity, genuineness, and credibility of these sacred writings.—*M. S. Terry*. **Uzzah put forth his hand**—There is reason to suspect that *Uzzah* had allowed his mind to regard the ark in too familiar a point of view during the years it had been in his charge in a private house, and was not suitably impressed with the reverence exacted by a symbol with which the Divine presence was so closely connected.—*Kitto*. We did not stop or think or remember—the frequent plea of sinners. But it was his business to think.—*E. Stock*. **Shook it**—The use of the Hebrew verb here is universal. In 2 Kings 9. 33, used as a transitive verb, it means *throw down*. So perhaps here. *The oxen were throwing or had thrown it down*, very likely by turning aside to eat what grain there might be on the threshing-floor.—*Bishop Hervey*. The ark seemed to be on the point of falling from the cart, owing to some sudden start or stumble of the oxen, or the roughness of the road.—*Cambridge Bible*.



7 And the anger of the LORD was kindled against Uz'zah; and <sup>5</sup> God smote him there for *his* <sup>4</sup> error: and there he died by the ark of God.

8 And Da'vid was displeased, be-

<sup>4</sup> 1 Sam. 6. 19.—<sup>5</sup> Or, rashness.—<sup>6</sup> Broken.—<sup>7</sup> That is,

Dr. Robinson, speaking of Jericho, thus describes a modern threshing-floor: "The grain, as soon as it is cut, is brought in small sheaves to the threshing-floors, on the backs of asses, or sometimes of camels. A level spot is selected for the threshing-floors, which are then constructed near each other, of a circular form, perhaps fifty feet in diameter, merely by beating down the earth hard. Upon these circles the sheaves are spread out quite thick, and the grain is trodden out by animals. Here were no less than five such floors, etc. The straw is occasionally turned with a large wooden fork, and, when sufficiently trodden, is thrown up with the same fork against the wind, in order to separate the grain."—*Bishop Hervey*.

7. God smote him—Such a penalty for a well-meant and natural action seems to us, at first sight, strangely severe. But it must be remembered that one of the great lessons which the nation of Israel had to learn was the unapproachable majesty of the holy God. The ark was the symbol of his presence, and the Levitical ordinances were designed to secure the strictest reverence for it. It was to be carried by the Levites, but they might not come near until it had been covered by the priests, nor touch it, **except** by the staves provided for the purpose, upon pain of death. Num. 4. 5; 15. 19, 20. It is probable that Uz'zah was a Levite, and if so, he ought to have known these injunctions; but, in any case, as the ark had been under his charge, he ought to have made himself acquainted with them. Perhaps he had come to regard the sacred symbol which had been in his house so long with undue familiarity. Nor was David free from blame in allowing such a neglect of the law. The occasion was an important one. It was the first step in the inauguration of a new era of worship in the newly-established capital of the kingdom, and if these breaches of the divine ordinances had been left unpunished the lessons they were intended to teach might have been neglected. Uz'zah's death was necessary for a solemn warning to David and the people.—*Cambridge Bible*. For his error—The Hebrew word occurs nowhere else, but, if genuine, may best be rendered thus, or, as in the margin, *for his rashness*. He died—It is not said that he perished immediately, or that he died eternally;

cause the LORD had <sup>6</sup> made a breach upon Uz'zah; and he called the name of the place *Perez-uz'zah* to this day.

9 And <sup>6</sup> Da'vid was afraid of the

the breach of Uz'zah.—<sup>6</sup> Ps. 119. 129, Luke 5. 8.

he may have repented of his sin, as the Hebrew interpreters suppose.—*Wordsworth*.

Uz'zah was, therefore, a type of all who, with good intentions, humanly speaking, yet with unsanctified minds, interfere in the affairs of the kingdom of God, from the notion that they are in danger, and with the hope of saving them.—*O. V. Gerlach*.

If such reverence was due to the ark of the covenant, which was sprinkled with the blood typifying that of Christ, with how much awe ought the name of Christ and the "Blood of the Covenant" itself to be treated! See Heb. 10. 29.—*Wordsworth*.

8. David was displeased—As he had not only resolved upon the removal of the ark, but had also planned the way in which it should be taken to Jerusalem, he could not trace the occasion of Uz'zah's death to any other cause than his own plans. He was, therefore, angry that such misfortune had attended his undertaking.—*Kil and Delitzsch*. David was not angry against God, for the next verse tells us that he was afraid of him.—*M. S. Terry*. Made a breach—Violently interposed in a sudden stroke of Divine judgment.—*M. S. Terry*. Perez-uz'zah—He took care to perpetuate the remembrance of this stroke by a new name he gave to the place, *Perez-uz'zah*, the breach of Uz'zah, Verse 8. He had been lately triumphing in the breach made upon his enemies, and called the place *Bud-Perazim*, a place of breaches. But here is a breach upon his friends. When we see one breach, we should consider that we know not where the next will be.—*M. Barry*. To this day.—Implying a long interval between David and the time of the writer.—*Bishop Hervey*.

9. David was afraid—His feelings on this alarming judgment were greatly excited on various accounts, dreading that the displeasure of God had been provoked by the removal of the ark; that the punishment would be extended to himself and people, and that they might fall into some error or neglect during the further conveyance of the ark. He resolved to wait for more light and direction as to the path of duty. An earlier consultation by Urim would have led him right at the first; whereas, in this

LORD that day, and said, How shall the ark of the LORD come to me?

10 So Da'vid would not remove the ark of the LORD unto him into the city of Da'vid; but Da'vid carried it aside into the house of O'bed-e'dom the Gittite.

11 And the ark of the Lord continued in the house of O'bed-e'dom the Gittite

7 Gen. 30.

perplexity and distress, he was reaping the fruits of inconsideration and neglect.—*R. Jamieson.*

10. **Unto him**—Showing that at this time he was already in the city of David. Compare 6. 16.—*Bishop Hervey.* **Obed-edom**—A Levite descended from Kohath, (see 1 Chron. 28. 8,) and afterward honored as one of the “door-keepers.” 1 Chron. 15. 24. His family long continued in the sanctuary service as keepers of the sacred vessels.—*M. S. Terry.* **The Gittite**—He is called a *Gittite* perhaps from Gath—Rimmon, in Manasseh, which belonged to the Kohathites. Josh. 21. 25.

See here the courage and faith of Obed-edom: he knew that the presence of the ark had been disastrous to Dagon, and had brought plagues on the Philistines, and that the men of Beth-she-mesh had been struck dead for looking into it; and that Uzzah had been smitten for touching it; and yet he gladly welcomed it, and harbored it for three months; and God blessed him for his faith. Obed-edom well knew that though “God is a consuming fire” to those who treat him with irreverence, he is infinite in mercy to those who obey him. The Gadarenes, smitten with fear, besought Jesus to depart out of their coasts, and we do not hear that he ever visited them again. But Zaccheus, animated by love, received him gladly, and Jesus said, “This day is salvation come to this house.”—*Wordsworth.*

11. **The Lord blessed Obed-edom**—Josephus says (but probably without extra-biblical authority) that Obed-edom, from having been poor, became rich, and that people observed it.—*C. H. Toy.* The consecrated house, where the presence of God abides and is revered, will not be wanting in divine blessings.—*M. S. Terry.*

The God of heaven will not receive any thing from men on free cost: he will pay liberally for his lodging; a plentiful blessing upon Obed-edom, and all his household. It was an honor to that zealous Gittite that the ark should come under his roof; yet God rewards that honor with benediction: never man was a loser by true godliness. The house of Obed-edom cannot this while want observation; the eyes of David and all Israel were never off from it, to see how it fared with this entertainment.—*Bishop Hall.*

three months: and the LORD<sup>7</sup> blessed O'bed-e'dom, and all his household.

12 And it was told king Da'vid, saying, The Lord hath blessed the house of O'bed-e'dom, and all that *pertaineth* unto him, because of the ark of God. So Da'vid went and brought up the ark of God from the house of O'bed-e'dom into the city of Da'vid with gladness.

27; 39. 5.

12. **David went and brought up the ark**—On this occasion, however, David adhered strictly to the instructions of the law, as the more elaborate account given in the Chronicles clearly shows. He not only gathered together all Israel at Jerusalem to join in this solemn act, but summoned the priests and Levites, and commanded them to sanctify themselves, and carry the ark “according to the right,” that is, as the Lord had commanded in the law of Moses, and to offer sacrifices during the procession, and sing songs, that is, psalms, with musical accompaniment.—*Keil and Delitzsch.*

The installation of the ark at Jerusalem was a great historical event. Henceforth the heathen Jebus was not only Jerusalem, but “the Holy City.” The feelings of David respecting it are seen in the Psalms. From this time he would fain make it holy, in fact as well as in name. Those only who had clean hands and a pure heart; who had not lifted up their soul to vanity, nor sworn deceitfully, were in his eyes fit to enter it. He fondly hoped, indeed, to form an ideal community worthy of the place in which Jehovah had chosen his dwelling.—*C. Geikie.*

#### Authorities to be Consulted.

On the ark, see Dr. Richard Newton on “The Jewish Tabernacle,” and articles in the Bible Educator, ii, 144; iii, 259. On the instruments of music, Bible Educator, 1, 19, 70, 183, 215, 296. On the removal of the ark, see Stanley's Lectures, No. 23. Kitto's Daily Bible Illustrations, 36th week. Geikie's Hours with the Bible, vol. iii, chap. 9. Bishop Hall's Contemplations. Freeman's Manners and Customs, 272, 295, 432. See Authorities on Lesson I. Foster's Cyclopaedia of Illustrations, [numbers marked with a star indicate the poetical quotations,] ver. 6: 4081; 7: 9959; 11: 858, \*1831, 3833.

#### Practical Thoughts.

##### THE SERVICES OF RELIGION.

1. The services of religion should not be neglected by a people while political interests are requiring their attention. Ver. 1.

2. The services of religion should receive attention from kings and rulers, whose influence is felt by the people around them. Ver. 1.

3. The services of religion should be popular, for all the people, bringing the masses into fellowship with God. Ver. 1.

4. The services of religion should recognise God as dwelling among his people. Ver. 2.

5. The services of religion should be conducted with due reverence, as in the immediate presence of the Holy One. Ver. 3, 4.

6. The services of religion should be in accordance with the commands which God has given. Ver. 6, 7.

7. The services of religion will bring a blessing and not a curse where they are rightly administered.

8. The services of religion should be conducted in the spirit of a holy joy and gladness. Ver. 5, 12.

#### Sermon Outline.

BY REV. C. W. CUSHING, D.D.

The ark was the most sacred piece of the furniture of the tabernacle—full of significance as well as mystery.

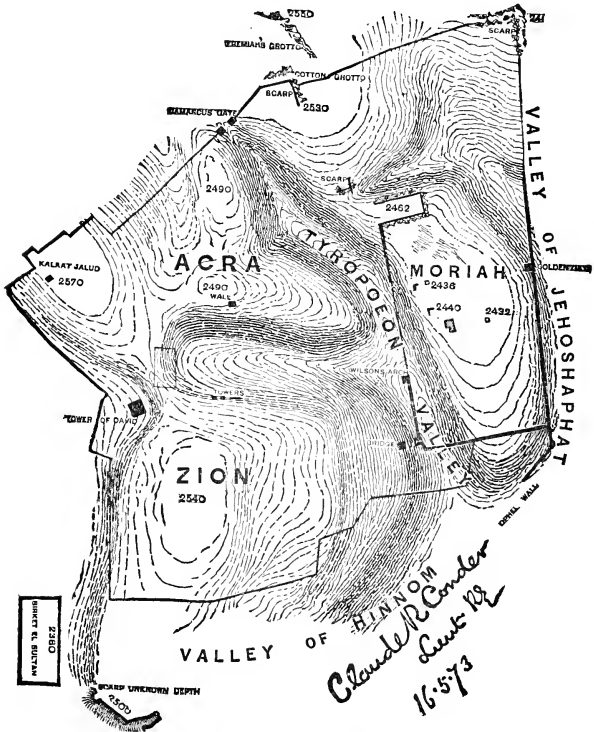
Once it was captured by the Philistines, and kept seven months at Ashdod, Gath, and Ekron. 1 Sam. 5. Here it was a great curse. It was placed in the temple of Dagon beside the great idol. In the morning the idol was found on its face before the ark. It was set up in its place again; but on the second morning it was found not only fallen before the ark, but its head and hands were off. Whenever the Philistines carried the ark, disease and destruction followed. Alarmed, they determined to send it back with presents. On a cart, drawn by two milk kine, they sent it to Beth-shemesh. It was received in the field of Joshua with great rejoicing. But the men of Beth-shemesh desecrated the ark by looking into it, and God slew fifty thousand and seventy men. 1 Sam. 6. 19. Alarmed they sent messengers to the inhabitants of Kirjath-jearim and begged them to come and fetch it away. So they came and took it to the house of Abinadab, where

it remained for 20 years. 1 Sam. 7. 1, 2. Again the sacredness of the ark was shown as David was removing it, for "when they came to Nachon's threshing-floor, Uzzah put forth his hand to the ark of God and took hold of it; for the oxen shook it. And the anger of the Lord was kindled against Uzzah, and God smote him there for his error, and there he died by the ark of God." 2 Sam. 6. 6. This made David afraid to take the ark to his city, and "so he carried it aside into the house of Obed-edom the Gittite." The ark abode in the house of Obed-edom three months, and the Lord blessed him and all his house.

In the old dispensation there was but one ark and one mercy-seat. In the new dispensation Christ builds a mercy-seat in every place and in every house where there is a devout worshiper. But as in olden times the mercy-seat was above, his word rested upon it, so is it now. The word of God was hidden underneath the mercy-seat, and the place where God revealed himself in his glory. It is not otherwise to-day.

The most precious thing which the ark contained was the tables of the law. Without these there is reason to believe that there would have been no mercy-seat, and no revelation of the Divine Presence. In the Second Temple the ark was without the revealed law, and was also without a recognized mercy-seat, and the Shechinah. The most precious thing in *our* homes is the word of God. The proper recognition of it there, is the sure precursor of God's blessing. There is no substitute for it. Put any other book in its place, and the authority and the Divine illumination will be gone. Divine oracles come from no other source. Or men may pervert the Bible as the Philistines did the ark, but they will find a curse rather than a blessing will follow. For here is the hiding of God's power.

As the ark which inclosed the law was the center of the Temple, the local point of light and worship, so the Bible is the central influence, the source of inspiration and power, upon every altar of worship in every Christian home. It is impossible to overestimate the blessings—the assurance, the comfort, the restraint, the upholding and encouragement—which abide upon those who go out from such a sacred center in the home. May this ark of blessings be cherished in all our homes!



Rock Soundings at Jerusalem.

B. C. 1042.]

LESSON III.

[July 20.

GOD'S COVENANT WITH DAVID.—2 Sam. 7. 1-16.

**GOLDEN TEXT.**—Thy throne shall be established forever.—2 SAM. 7. 16.

**TIME.**—B. C. 1042, immediately after the events of the last lesson.

**PLACE.**—Jerusalem.

**INTRODUCTION.**—This chapter is the proper sequel and completion of the two foregoing ones. In the last chapter but one David himself is anointed king of all the tribes of Israel, and conquers the Jebusites, and takes Mount Zion, and makes it the capital of his kingdom. In the next chapter, the one immediately preceding the present, David endeavors to bring the ark of God to Mount Zion, and, after some hindrances, he brought it, but he did not settle it in the tabernacle: the work is yet incomplete. The present chapter carries us forward to the consummation of the work. David desires to build a house for God at Jerusalem, but God forbids him; at the same time he gives to David a glorious revelation of the

future. He promises to build a house for David himself, and that David's seed shall be set up after him, and that he shall build a house for God's name, and that David's kingdom and throne shall be established for ever. Verses 12-16. This chapter exhibits a new era in Scripture prophecy. A new step in advance is here gained. In the prophecy of Jacob (see Gen. 49, 8-10) the particular *tribe*—that of *Judah*—had been specified from which the Messiah should come, and have an *everlasting dominion*; and so the mind of David, and all faithful men, had been opened to receive clearer light on that glorious subject. And now the particular *family* in that tribe is pre-announced—the family of *David* himself. Standing on the vantage ground of this prophecy David himself, and other writers of the Psalms, and other prophets of the Old Testament, henceforth describe the kingdom of Christ as settled on Mount Zion, and speak of Christ as enthroned on the seat of David.—*Wordsworth*.

1 And it came to pass,<sup>1</sup> when the king sat in his house, and the LORD had given him rest round about from all his enemies,

2 That the king said unto Na'than the

prophet, See now, I dwell in <sup>2</sup>an house of cedar, but the ark of God dwelleth <sup>3</sup>within curtains.

3 And Na'than said to the king, Go,

<sup>1</sup> 1 Chron. 17, 1.—<sup>2</sup> Chap.

5, 11.—<sup>3</sup> Exod. 26, 1; 40, 21.

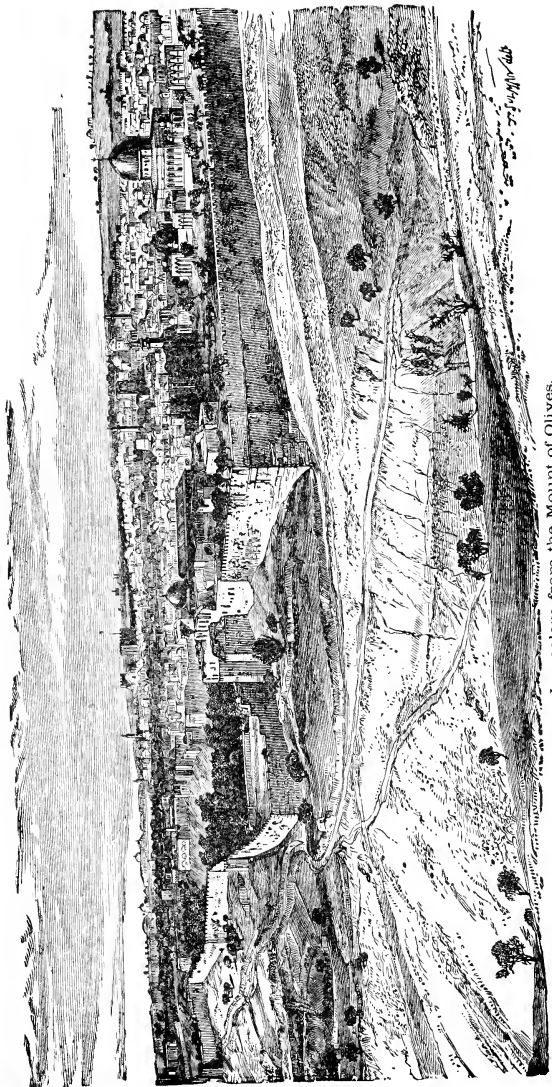
1. **It came to pass**—At what period of his reign David formed this resolution to build a temple cannot be exactly determined. On the one hand, the emphatic words “when the Lord had given him rest round about from all his enemies” (comp. verse 9) seem to point to a time after some, at least, of the wars recorded in chap. 8. On the other hand, it was before the birth of Solomon, (verse 12,) and so cannot be placed in the latter years of his reign. The arrangement of the book is not strictly chronological, and this narrative finds a most suitable place here from its close connection with the subject of the preceding chapter.—*Cambridge Bible*. **The king**—Observe this phrase, “*the king*.” The sacred historian changes his style from “*David*” to “*the king*,” because he is about to speak of the perpetuity of his *kingdom* in Christ.—*Wordsworth*. **Sat in his house**—In quiet meditation, for God had given him rest. Probably the 132d Psalm is the expression of his feelings at this time.—*Wordsworth*. **Had given him rest**—From the hostility of the house of Saul, and the attacks of the Philistines. He had not been long at rest, nor was it long before he was again engaged in war; but, at present, he enjoyed a calm, and he was in his element when he was sitting in his house meditating on the law of God.—*M. Henry*.

2. **Nathan the prophet**—The first mention of one of the most eminent men in the reigns of David and Solomon. It was he who rebuked David for his sin with Bathsheba, (chap. 12, 1, *f.*;) who became Solomon's tutor, (chap. 12, 25, note,) and took a leading part in securing his succession to the throne, (1 Kings 1, 22, *f.*;) who wrote a history of the reign of David, and of part, at least, of the reign of Solomon, (1 Chron. 29, 29; 2 Chron.

9, 29,) from which, in all probability, a large portion of the books of Samuel, Kings, and Chronicles is derived.—*Cambridge Bible*. **I dwell in a house of cedar**—The palace which Hiram had sent men and materials to build in Jerusalem had been finished. It was magnificent for that age, though made wholly of wood; houses in warm countries not being required to possess the solidity and thickness of walls which are requisite for dwellings in regions exposed to rain and cold. Cedar was the rarest and most valuable timber. The elegance and splendor of his own royal mansion, contrasted with the mean and temporary tabernacle in which the ark of God was placed, distressed the pious mind of David.—*R. Jamieson*. **The ark of God**—See note in last lesson on verse 2. **Within curtains**—Literally, *in the midst of the curtains*, (1 Chron. 17, 1,) *under curtains*, that is, tent-coverings woven of goat's hair. Exod. 26, 7. A compunctious thought and feeling. He had housed himself right royally while the sacred symbol of Jehovah's presence had been quite neglected.—*M. S. Terry*.

David can take little pleasure in a house of cedar for himself unless the ark have one. Those who stretched themselves upon beds of ivory, and were not grieved for the affliction of Joseph, though they had David's music, had not David's spirit. (Amos 6, 4, 6;) nor they who dwell in their *coiled houses* while God's house *lay waste*. Hag. 14.—*M. Henry*.

3. **Nathan said to the king**—The prophet gave this counsel from the apparent propriety and laudableness of David's purpose, and not by divine revelation. Accordingly he was called upon that night to counsel the king differently. Here we learn that the prophets were not always under inspiration.—*M. S. Terry*. **The**



Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives.

do all that *is* <sup>a</sup> in thine heart; for the LORD *is* with thee.

4 And it came to pass that night, that the word of the LORD came unto Na'athan, saying,

5 Go and tell <sup>a</sup> my servant Da'vid, Thus saith the LORD, Shalt thou build me an house for me to dwell in ?

<sup>a</sup> 1 Kings 8, 17; 1 Chron. 22, 7; 28, 2.—<sup>a</sup>To my servant, to  
1 Chron. 17, 6;

prophets, when following the impulse of their own feelings, or forming conjectural opinions, fell into frequent mistakes. See 1 Sam. 16, 6; 2 Kings 4, 27.—*R. Jamison*.

4. **It came to pass**—There is much solemnity in the way the subject is here introduced. The night was the recognized time for prophetic visions. Comp. 1 Sam. 3, 3, *sqq.*; Num. 12, 6, etc.—*Bishop Hervey*. **That night**—Because David's mistake was pious, and from an honest mind, God would not suffer him to lie long in his mistakes, nor to disquiet his mind, or run himself into inconveniences in order to the work before he gave a stop to it.—*Pool*. **The word of the Lord**—The *word of the Lord* is described as having come to Nathan by *night*; that is, it is related that he received a divine revelation *in the form and through the medium of the word*, he receiving its contents with the inner ear of the spirit as a divine decision respecting that which was stirring his heart.—*Erdmann*. **Came unto Nathan**—Observe the clear distinction between Nathan's own judgment, which approved David's resolution, and the divine message which he was commissioned to deliver to David.—*Cambridge Bible*.

A new era had arrived in the history of Israel. The earthly kingdom was to be established, and a permanent office was to be instituted, co-ordinately with it, in order to represent God's supremacy over the earthly monarch; and to advise, to exhort, and, if need were, to correct, rebuke, and even to denounce, the earthly sovereign for his sins; and even to declare his dethronement in the name of God, the supreme Ruler of Israel, the King of kings and Lord of lords; and thus to prepare the way for the time when the functions of king and prophet would all coalesce in *Christ*. This permanent office, placed side by side with the throne, was the office of *prophet*.—*Wordsworth*.

5. **Go and tell**—The connection of thought in verses 5-13 is as follows: "Thou shalt not build a house for *M.*, (5-7,) but *I*, who have chosen thee to be the ruler of my people, will build a house for thee, (8-11,) and thy son shall erect a house for *Me.*" 12, 13.—*Cam-*

6 Whereas I have not dwelt in *any* house since <sup>b</sup> the time that I brought up the children of Is'ra-el out of E'gypt, even to this day, but have walked in a tent and in a tabernacle.

7 In all *the places* wherein I <sup>a</sup> have walked with all the children of Is'ra-el spake I a word with <sup>b</sup> any of the tribes

David.—<sup>a</sup> 1 Kings 8, 16.—<sup>b</sup> Lev. 26, 11; Deut. 2, 14.—  
any of the judges.

*bridge Bible*. **My servant David**—Any Israelite might call himself God's servant in addressing God; but only a few who were raised up to do special service, such as Moses and Joshua, are honored by being thus distinctively styled "servants of Jehovah."—*Cambridge Bible*. **Shalt thou build me a house**—Is not such a purpose on thy part presumption? Nay, rather, I will make thee a house. Compare verse 11. The question implies a negative answer, and in 1 Chron. 17, 4, we have, "Thou shalt not build me a house."—*M. S. Terry*.

6. **Whereas**—The Hebrew word never means *whereas*. It is simply "for," or *because*. It expresses the reason why David was not to build an house.—*Bishop Hervey*. **I have not dwelt in any house**—As long as the quiet and full possession of the land of Canaan, which had been promised by the Lord to the people of God for their inheritance, was disputed by their enemies round about, even the dwelling-place of their God could not assume any other form than that of a wanderer's tent. **Have walked**—As a tent is a traveler's dwelling, so, as long as God's dwelling was a tent, he himself appeared as if traveling or going from place to place.—*Keil and Delitzsch*. This *migratory* character of his Church was a preparation and training, not only for faith in his omnipresence, but also for the reception of the doctrine of the *universality* of the Church, not to be limited to Palestine, but to be extended to all nations; and so Stephen expounds it. See Acts 7, 46-49.—*Wordsworth*. **In a tent and in a tabernacle**—The word *a tent*, refers especially to the outward covering of skins, etc.; the *tabernacle* denotes the framework of boards and bars. Observe the constant reference to the exodus and to the details as given in the Books of Moses.—*Bishop Hervey*.

7. **In all the places**—Both in the wilderness, and in the migrations of the ark to Gilgal, Shiloh, Kirjath-jearim, and Zion. **Spake I a word with any of the tribes**—The phrase is a condensed one, the meaning of which is, that whatever tribe had in times past supplied the ruler of Israel: whether Ephraim in the days of

of Is'ra-el, whom I commanded <sup>7</sup> to feed my people Is'ra-el, saying, Why build ye not me an house of cedar?

8 Now therefore so shalt thou say unto my servant Da'vid, Thus saith the LORD of hosts, I took thee from the

<sup>7</sup> Chap. 5, 2; Psa. 78, 71, 72; Matt. 2, 6; Acts 26, 28.

Joshua, or Benjamin in the time of Saul, or Judah in that of David, God had never required any of those tribes to build a house in one of their cities.—*Bishop Hervey*. In Psalm 78, 67, 68, the election of David as prince, and of Zion as the site of the sanctuary, is described as the election of the *tribe* of Judah and the rejection of the tribe of Ephraim.—*Keil and Delitzsch*. To feed—*To tend*, as a shepherd tends his sheep. Compare note on Lesson 1, verse 2. *Cambridge Bible*. A house of cedar—Beams

sheep-cote, <sup>6</sup> from following the sheep, to be ruler over my people, over Is'ra-el:

9 And I was with thee whithersoever thou wentest, and have cut off all thine enemies <sup>d</sup> out of thy sight, and have made thee <sup>a</sup> a great name, like unto the

<sup>c</sup> From after.—<sup>d</sup> From thy face. Psa. 89, 23.—<sup>a</sup> Gen. 12, 2.

nation had made a fixed sanctuary impossible hitherto, and even now the time for it was not yet fully come. The house of David must be firmly established, and peace secured, before this great step in the history of the national religion could be advantageously taken. Again, David was not to build the house "because he had shed much blood, and had made great wars." 1 Chron. 22, 8; 28, 3.—*Cambridge Bible*. Thus saith the LORD of hosts—Not only *Jehovah*, as in verse 5, but *Jehovah Sebaoth*, because he manifests himself in the following revelations as the God of the universe.—*Keil and Delitzsch*.—I took thee from the sheep-cote—Better: "from the pasture." The word means "habitation," which, in reference to flocks, means, not where they spend the night, but where they feed, and this suits the context of our passage.—*C. H. Toy*.

It is good for those who are come to great preferment to be often reminded of their small beginnings, that they may always be humble and thankful.—*M. Henry*.

9. Was with thee—Both in the court of Saul, in his exile and wandering, and in his wars with the enemies of Israel, God had manifested his presence and given him success. All thine enemies—Meaning especially Saul and those who sided with him (2 Sam. 3, 1; 4, 8; 1 Sam. 18, 29; 20, 15, 16; 24, 4; 26, 8.)—*Bishop Hervey*. Other enemies rose up afterward, (see chap. 8.)

but the victory gained over the former by God's help was an assurance to David that the others would be eventually cut off.—*Wordsworth*. Have made thee a great name—Unquestionably David appears as the ablest, the most successful, and, in every way, the greatest of the kings of Israel. His is the noblest name, after Moses, in the history. He found Israel a disorganized, weak association of twelve tribes, without coherence and without influence. He healed old strifes, consolidated the nation, conquered all the surrounding lands, and left to his son a united empire twelve times the size of Israel



Cedar of Lebanon.

of cedar marked a costly building. Of course the cedar of Lebanon is a totally different tree from what we improperly call the *red* or *Virginian Cedar*, which supplies the sweet-scented cedar-wood, and is really a kind of juniper (*Juniperus Virginiana*.) The cedar of Lebanon is a close-grained, light-colored, yellowish wood, with darker knots and veins.—*Bishop Hervey*.

8. So shalt thou say—The reasons why David's zeal was thus checked must be carefully considered. The unsettled condition of the



name of the great *men* that *are* in the earth.

10 Moreover I will appoint a place for my people Is'ra-el, and <sup>9</sup> will plant them, that they may dwell in a place of their own, and move no more; neither shall the children of wickedness afflict them any more, as beforetime,

11 And as since the time that I commanded judges to be over my people

Is'ra-el, and have caused thee to rest from all thine enemies. Also the Lord telleth thee that he will make thee an house.

12 And <sup>10</sup> when the days be fulfilled, and thou <sup>11</sup> shalt sleep with thy fathers, <sup>12</sup> I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom.

<sup>9</sup> Ex. 13, 21; 80, 8; Jer. 24, 6; Amos 9, 15.—191 Kings 2, 4.

when he assumed its crown. All his measures were dictated by a profound wisdom, and in true greatness his character, notwithstanding his sins, rose above all his successors. During his time alone Israel stood as the controlling Oriental monarchy.

A *great* name is what they who have have great reason to be thankful for, and may improve to good purposes; but what they that have not have no reason to be ambitious of; a *good* name is more desirable. A man may pass through the world very obscurely, and yet very comfortably.—*M. Henry.*

10. I will appoint—All the versions have, with strange unanimity, translated *I will appoint* as if it were in the future tense. All difficulty is removed and the sense made plain when it is properly translated as the preterit: *I have appointed a place*, etc., namely, the land of Canaan.—*M. S. Terry.* **Move no more**—This promise was kept for four hundred years, but why was it not fulfilled forever? Because it depended upon the loyalty of Israel to its God. When the people violated their part of the contract, God's justice required their punishment in the loss of their privileges. **As beforetime**—When in the bondage of Egypt.—*M. S. Terry.*

11. And as since the time—It is best to connect the first clause of verse 11 with verse 10. *Beforetime* refers to the beginning of the nation's history in Egypt; *since*, etc., to the various oppressions they had suffered from the beginning of the period of the Judges down to the present.—*Cambridge Bible.* **I commanded judges**—The contrast is that of the troublous unsettled times of the Judges, and the frequent servitudes of Israel in those times, with the settled prosperity and independence of the kingdom of David and Solomon.—*Bishop Harvey.* **Have caused thee to rest**—This sentence stands in contrast with the preceding, "In Egypt, and during the Judges' rule, there were oppressions; but now I have given you rest." **Also the Lord telleth thee**—Or it may be, "And the

<sup>10</sup> Deut. 31, 16; Act. 13, 36.—191 Kings 8, 20; Ps. 132, 11.

*Lord hath told thee*," namely, by the mouth of Samuel. The last is rather preferable, as making the use of the *third* instead of the *first* person more natural.—*Bishop Harvey.* **He will make thee an house**—The "house" is the royal authority in Israel, which is assured and established for his family.—*Erdmann.* This thought is not merely a play upon words entirely in the spirit of prophecy, but contains the deep general truth that God must first of all build a man's house before the man can build God's house, and has reference especially to the kingdom of God in Israel.—*K. ð.*

God built for David a house—even a temple—by the incarnation of Christ, who came from his seed. For Christ calls his own body, which he took from the blessed Virgin Mary, of the seed of David, a temple: "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will build it up again. He spake of the temple of his body." John 2, 21.—*Theodore.*

12. When thy days shall be fulfilled—The prophet, having detailed God's past mercies to David, now passes on to direct prophecy, and that one of the most important in the Old Testament.—*Bishop Harvey.* **I will set up thy seed**—First, Solomon, who recognizes the fulfillment of this promise in his elevation to the throne, (1 Kings 8, 15-20;) the line of David's descendants, who succeeded him on the throne of Judah; and, finally Christ, in whom the prophecy reaches its highest fulfillment.—*Cambridge Bible.* **Which shall proceed**—The seed here spoken of was still in the future when this promise was made to David.—*Erdmann.* It is customary for the *eldest son born after the father's succession to the throne* to succeed him in his dignity as king. David had several sons by Bathsheba, born after his removal to Jerusalem. Chup. 5, 14-16; cf. 1 Chron. 3, 5. But by a special ordinance and promise of God his successor was to be a son born after this time; and the departure from the established usage of the East, in fixing the succession, can be accounted

13 He <sup>13</sup> shall build an house for my name; and I will <sup>14</sup> stablish the throne of his kingdom for ever.

14 I <sup>15</sup> will be his father, and he shall be my son. If <sup>16</sup> he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men:

<sup>13</sup> 1 Kings 5. 5.—<sup>14</sup> Psa. 89. 4.—<sup>15</sup> Heb. 1. 5.—<sup>16</sup> Psa. 89. 30.

for on no other known ground except the fulfillment of the Divine promise.—*R. Jamieson.*

13. **He shall build an house**—The house which Solomon built continued till the time of the Babylonish exile, when it was burned by Nebuchadnezzar, (2 Kings 25. 8;) but it was rebuilt at the close of the exile, (Ezra 6. 15,) and of it then the prophet Haggai said, (Hag. 2. 9,) "The glory of this latter house shall be greater than that of the former;" for this second temple was the connecting link between the Jews of Haggai's time and the Messiah.—*M. S. Terry.* **For my name**—The name of God signifies God himself so far as he has revealed and manifested himself to men. His promise concerning the temple was that he would "put his name there;" that is, that he would be present and reveal himself there in an especial manner.—*Cambridge Bible.* **For ever**—The words *for ever*, emphatically twice repeated in verse 16, show very distinctly that this prophecy looks beyond the succession of the kings of Judah of the house of David, and embraces the throne of the Christ, according to the angel's interpretation as given in Luke 1. 31-33, where the reference to this passage cannot be mistaken.—*Bishop Hervey.* And the title, *the Son of David*, given to the Messiah in the rabbinical writings, as well as its special application to Jesus in the New Testament, springs mainly from the acknowledged Messianic significance of this prophecy.

14. **I will be his father**—The relation of *fatherhood* and *sonship* will exist between the covenant God of Israel and the seed of David. This denotes, in the first place, the relation of the most cordial mutual *love*, which attests its enduring character by *fidelity*, and demonstrates its existence toward the Lord by active *obedience*.—*Erdmann.* **If he commit iniquity**—The words *if he commit iniquity I will chasten him*, etc., supply the illustration of God's dealing with Solomon and his successors as a Father, for *what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?*" Heb. 12. 5-10; Prov. 3. 12. The literal translation of the words shows this more clearly . . . "and he shall be to me a son, whom, if he trans-

gresses, I will correct," etc.—*Bishop Hervey.* **I will chasten him**—The king's son is not to be exempted from the punishments common to all men who act perversely. In this matter God is no respecter of persons. Accordingly, when Solomon forsook the law of the Lord, he was threatened with bitter and humiliating judgments. 1 Kings 11. 9-40.—*M. S. Terry.* **With the rod of men**, etc.—That is, such a chastisement as men inflict upon their children to correct and reclaim them, not to destroy them.—*Bishop Hervey.* **As I took it from Saul**—The family of Saul became totally extinct. The family of David remained till the incarnation. Joseph and Mary were both of that family; Jesus was the only heir to the kingdom of Israel. But he did not choose to sit on the secular throne; he ascended the spiritual throne, and now he is exalted to the right hand of God, a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance and remission of sins.—*Clarke.*

15 But my mercy shall not depart away from him, <sup>17</sup> as I took it from Saul, whom I put away before thee.

16 And <sup>18</sup> thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee: thy throne shall be established for ever.

<sup>17</sup> 1 Sam. 15. 23.—<sup>18</sup> Psa. 89. 36, 37; John 12. 34.

15. **My mercy shall not depart**—The contrast is that between the punishment of sin in individuals and the favor that remains permanently with the family, whereby the divine promise becomes an *unconditioned* one.—*Hengstenberg.*

16. **Shall be established for ever**—*For ever . . . for ever*—Of all the words of promise that fell on David's ears these were the most charming. They find repeated utterance in his prayer, (verses 19, 25, 29,) often in the Psalms, (15. 50; 89. 29,) and even echo in the angel's words of salutation to the mother of our Lord. Luke 1. 32, 33. By them we see that this message of Nathan to David was largely a Messianic prophecy.—*M. S. Terry.* No earthly kingdom, and no posterity of any single man, has eternal duration like the heaven and the earth; but the different families of men become extinct, as the different earthly kingdoms perish, and other families and kingdoms take their place. The posterity of David, therefore, could only last for ever by running out in a person who lives for ever; that is, by culminating in the Messiah, who lives for ever, and of whose kingdom there is no end.—*Keil and Delitzsch.*

Authorities to be Consulted.

See the list of lives of David, at the end of Lesson I. On the prophets, see Stanley's Lectures on the Jewish Church, vol. i, lectures 19, 20. On David's kingdom and its organization, see Geikie's Hours with the Bible, vol. iii, chap. 9. On the subject of the lesson, Kitto's Daily Bible Illustrations, 37th week. Foster's Cyclopaedia of Illustrations, [numbers marked with a star refer to poetical quotations.] ver. 2: 3611; 5: 11291; 8: \*3502; 9: \*1608, 2718; 10: \*3535; 16: 3478.

Practical Thoughts.

THE REWARDS OF A FAITHFUL SERVANT.

1. God gives to his servant peace, a rest from trouble and danger. Ver. 1.
2. God sees and honors the grateful desire of his servant to show forth his thankfulness to God and to advance his cause. Ver. 5.
3. God lifts up his servant from a lowly to a lofty station, from the sheepfold to the scepter, when he finds him fit for greatness. Ver. 8.
4. God gives his presence and aid to his servant, making his plans successful. Ver. 9.
5. God gives to his servant a worthy name, lifting him up above the sons of men. Ver. 9.
6. God gives to his servant a covenant, extending not only to himself, but to his children after him. Vers. 11, 12.
7. God gives to his servant an everlasting inheritance, a kingdom enduring forever. Ver. 16.

Sermon Outline.

BY REV. D. H. MULLER, D.D.

The circumstances connected with the covenant or promise God made with David, are recorded in the lesson. This promise presents three thoughts worthy of consideration:

1. *Character of the persons in the covenant, God and David.* The term "covenant," as applied here, can only be understood as an accommodation. The first and only being who can properly make a cove-

nant is God—a being of veracity, power, and wisdom. Beneath his promises are his unchangeable truth, unlimited power, and infinite wisdom. How strong should be our faith in his almighty word. The second person who receives the benefits of this promise is David, a successful and prosperous king, whose heart is filled with gratitude, humility, and prayer. Great success has given history its despots, cruel and arrogant; its Nebuchadnezzars, Caesars, Herods. The natural man bears success with ill grace. The recognition of his dependence upon God, of the deliverances wrought for him, and of the source of his prosperity and greatness, created in David a deep sense of his increased obligations to God.

2. *Character of the covenant.* It was complete, extending to the nation, the temple, and the house of David. It had a twofold application, literal and spiritual, temporal and eternal. Solomon as David's successor and the builder of the temple, the temple on Mount Moriah, and the chosen nation, the kingdom of Israel, did not exhaust the promise. The promise contained a glorious prophecy of a spiritual nation, of a spiritual Zion, and of a King, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, whose kingdom is "forever."

3. *Fulfillment of the covenant.* Jesus was the promised seed of David. He is the successor to David's throne, whom Solomon, in all his glory, but typified. His throne is set up, but his kingdom is not yet established. He is to triumph and reign "forever." This fulfillment rests on the faithfulness of God. The steady progress in the development of the divine plans, from the promise to Eve to the birth of "David's promised Son," and the mighty developments since that birth, assure the believing heart that the kingdom of Christ has not only come to stay, but will prevail. For its complete establishment the Christian should pray. Confidence in its speedy triumph is expressed in prayer. For this end the Church that measures up to her full mission and measure will labor with consecrated zeal, talents, and money. The day draws near when the "mountain of the Lord's house" will fill the earth; when the righteous and peaceful dominion will have no end, and the halleluiah chorus shall arise from earth to heaven with the burden of its exultant strains—Jesus is king, and his throne established forever.

B. C. 1040.]

LESSON IV.

[July 27.

KINDNESS TO JONATHAN'S SON.—2 Sam. 9. 1-13.

**GOLDEN TEXT.**—Thine own friend and thy father's friend, forsake not.—PROV. 27. 10.

TIME.—B. C. 1040.

PLACES.—Jerusalem, and Lo-debar, a town east of the Jordan.

CONNECTING LINK.—Subjugation of Israel's enemies. 2 Sam. 8. 1-18.

INTRODUCTION.—When the intelligence came to Gibeath that the Philistines were victorious, and that Saul and Jonathan were slain, the nurse, supposing the Philistines close at hand, and that all belonging to Saul would be sought for and rooted out, hastened to flee with the young child, and, as his speed was

not equal to her fears, she seems to have carried him in her arms. In her extreme haste she either let him fall, or stumbled and fell with him, by which his feet were so badly injured that he remained lame for life. He was taken for safety beyond the Jordan, and was brought up in the house of the generous and wealthy Machir, the son of Ammiel, at Lo-debar, in Gilead. There he remained, probably in such obscurity as left few aware of his existence, for it could not have consisted with the policy of Ishbosheth or Abner to bring him conspicuously into notice, and David could have had little opportunity of becoming acquainted with a fact shrouded from view in a quarter so remote, and in the dominions of his rival. Besides, if David had ever heard of his existence, it had been by his rightful name of Meri-baal, and he would hardly recognize him under the altered name of Mephibosheth. This nickname was not at all a pleasant one for any man to be called by, but having got into use it would be preferred by those anxious for his safety on the one hand, and by those whose interest it was to keep him out of mind on the other. When Ishbosheth was slain, and all Israel went over to David, Mephibosheth was about twelve years old, and there were obvious reasons why the friends who had taken charge of him should desire his existence to be forgotten. Thus Mephibosheth lived a quiet and peaceful life among his friends at Lo-debar; and when he grew to manhood he married and had a son.—*Kitto*. Since Mephibosheth was only five years old at the time of his father's death, (chap. 4. 4,) and now had a young son, (verse 12,) the incident here recorded cannot have occurred till David had been reigning at Jerusalem for some seven years at least, when Mephibosheth would be about twenty years old.—*Cambridge Bible*.

1 And Da'vid said, Is there yet any that is left of the house of Saul, that I may show <sup>1</sup> him kindness for Jon'a-than's sake ?

2 And *there was* of the house of Saul a servant, whose name *was* Zi'ba: and when they had called him unto Da'vid, the king said unto him, *Art thou*

Zi'ba? And he said, Thy servant *is he*.

3 And the king said, *Is there not yet any of the house of Saul, that I may show <sup>2</sup> the kindness of God unto him?* And Zi'ba said unto the king, Jon'a-than hath yet a son, *which is <sup>4</sup> lame on his feet*.

<sup>1</sup> 1 Sam. 18. 3; 20. 14; Prov. 27. 10.—<sup>2</sup> Chap.

16. 1; 19. 17.—<sup>3</sup> 1 Sam. 20. 14.—<sup>4</sup> Chap. 4. 4.

1. And David said—Being but five years old at his father's death, (chap. 4. 4,) Mephibosheth must have been born during the period of David's wandering, so that it is nothing strange that David had no knowledge of him; and the incessant cares of his reign had thus far prevented the king's making special inquiry into this matter. Now, in a time of peace, his thoughts go back to the brotherly covenant made between himself and Jonathan, (1 Sam. 18. 3; 20. 15; 20. 42,) and he yearns for opportunity to requite some of the kindness of that noble prince.—*M. S. Terry*. Is there yet any—David's question: *Is it so that there is yet any one left to Saul's house?* presupposes that he had made inquiry and gotten information thereof, and now wished to assure himself of what he had heard. He had, perhaps some time before, accidentally heard of the concealed abode of the unfortunate last scion of Saul's house in a remote place.—*Erlmann*. Of the house of Saul—He doth not say, Is there any of the house of Jonathan?—but, of Saul?—that, for his friend's sake, he may show favor to the posterity of his persecutor.—*Bishop Hall*. For Jonathan's sake—Jonathan, the son of Saul, and naturally David's rival in the expectation of the throne, and in the affections of the people, had shown a romantic affection for David "pass-

ing the love of women." 2 Sam. 1. 26. He had risked his father's favor and his own life by his friendship; had warned David of danger and visited him in his wanderings, and had declared himself willing to give up the kingdom for his sake. David's gratitude now finds expression fifteen years after Jonathan's death.

Good men should seek opportunities of doing good. *The liberal deviseth liberal things*. Isa. 32. 8. For the most proper objects of our kindness and charity are such as will not be frequently met with without inquiry. The most necessitous are the least clamorous.—*M. Henry*.

2, 3. Ziba—This slave of Saul seems to have become a freedman at his master's death, and so well did he improve all advantages that at this time he had himself become the head of a family of fifteen sons and twenty slaves.—*M. S. Terry*. The kindness of God—The leading idea seems to be "an everlasting kindness," like God's favor to his people. Rom. 11. 29.—*Bishop Hervey*. Others understand it of kindness in God, out of reverence for God, for God's sake, (Keil,) or take the expression as merely a superlative one—very great kindness, (Patrick;) others combine these three views, and this is better; kindness shown from an indwelling in God will be pure and great kindness such as God shows.—*C. H. Toy*. Jonathan hath yet a son—See

4 And the king said unto him, Where *is* he? And Zi'ba said unto the king, Behold, he *is* in the house of Ma'chir, the son of Am'mi-el, in Lo-de'bar.

5 Then king Da'vid sent, and fetched him out of the house of Ma'chir, the son of Am'mi-el, from Lo-de'bar.

6 Now when Me-phib'o-sheth, the

8 Chap. 17. 27.—a Called Meribbaal,

Introduction. **Lame on his feet**—His lameness (chap. 4. 4) had prevented him from taking any part in the public contests of the time. Besides, according to oriental notions, the younger son of a crowned monarch has a preferable claim to the succession over the son of a mere heir-apparent; and, hence, his name was never heard of as the rival of his uncle Ishbosheth. His insignificance had led to his being lost sight of, and it was only through Ziba that David learned his existence, and the retired life he passed with one of the great families in trans-Jordanic Canaan who remained attached to the fallen dynasty.—*R. Jamieson*.

4. **Machir, the son of Ammiel**—A man of wealth and position, to judge from the welcome which he gave David in his flight from Absalom. Chap. 17. 27-29. He may have taken charge of Mephibosheth at Jonathan's death. It may be inferred, from his name, that he belonged to the tribe of Manasseh. Num. 32. 39, 40.—*Cambridge Bible*. This Machir appears to have been a very generous, free-hearted man, and to have entertained Mephibosheth, not out of any disaffection to David or his government, but in compassion to the reduced son of a prince, for afterward we find him kind to David himself when he fled from Absalom; he is named (chap. 17. 27) among those that furnished the king with what he wanted at Mahanaim; though when David sent for Mephibosheth from him he little thought that the time would come when he himself would gladly be beholden to him: and perhaps Machir was then the more ready to help David, in recompense for his kindness to Mephibosheth.—*M. Henry*. **Lo-debar**—Evidently on the east of Jordan, and in the neighborhood of Ishbosheth's capital, Mahanaim, (chap. 17. 27,) but not identified by any modern traveler.—*Bishop Hervey*.

5. **King David sent**—David's psalm on the bringing up of the ark, "Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord??" (Psa. 2. 4.) shows his own feeling that one of the requisites for so high an honor was that he who was thus favored by

son of Jon'a-than, the son of Saul, was come unto Da'vid, he fell on his face, and did reverence. And Da'vid said, Me-phib'o-sheth. And he answered, Behold thy servant!

7 And Da'vid said unto him, Fear not: for I will surely show thee kindness for Jon'a-than thy father's sake, and will restore thee all the land of Saul

1 Chron. 8. 34.—6 Gen. 50. 21.

God should not "*swear deceitfully*," (Psa. 24. 3, 4;) and in the spirit of that psalm he now performs his oath to Saul and Jonathan.—*Wordsworth*.

6. **Mephibosheth**—In 1 Chron. 8. 34; 9. 40, he is called *Merib-baal* (and in the latter place also *Meri-baal*, probably by a clerical error.) The two names seem to have the same meaning: "destroying, shame," *Iosheth (sham)* being the equivalent for *Baal*, and *Mephir* ("scattering" or "destroying") being equivalent to *Merib*, "contending with." Compare Ish-bosheth and Esh-baal, Jerub-baal and Jorub-besheth. 2 Sam. 13. 21. etc.—*Ep. Hervey*.

**Was come unto David**—The picture of David's royal power and glory, in contrast with the poor, crippled son of Jonathan, the last scion of Saul's fallen house, comes out in greater splendor the deeper the latter humbles himself before him and trusts himself to his favor. In his noble conduct to Mephibosheth David demonstrates the friendship that he had sworn to Jonathan.—*Erdmann*. **He fell on his face**—He doubtless was in fear for his life, as David's speech, *Fear not*, indicates. Such generosity to a fallen rival as David showed in restoring him his paternal property seemed to him scarcely credible.—*Bishop Hervey*.

David can see neither Saul's blood nor lame legs in Mephibosheth while he sees in him the features of his friend Jonathan; how much less shall the God of mercies regard our infirmities, or the corrupt blood of our sinful progenitors, while he beholds us in the face of his Son, in whom he is well pleased!—*Bishop Hall*.

7. **David said . . . Fear not**—Mephibosheth might be afraid that David had only hunted him out to treat him after the common fashion of oriental usurpers, who often put all their predecessor's kindred to death.—*Cambridge Bible*. **Will restore thee all the land of Saul**—The landed property belonging to Saul had either fallen to David, as crown lands, or had been taken possession of by distant relations after the death of Saul.—*Keil and Delitzsch*. **Thou**

thy father; and thou shalt eat bread at my table continually.

8 And he bowed himself, and said, What *is* thy servant, that thou shouldst look upon such a dead dog as I am?

9 Then the king called to Zi'ba, Saul's servant, and said unto him, I have given unto thy master's son all that pertained to Saul and to all his house.

<sup>7</sup> Jer. 52. 33.—<sup>8</sup> 1 Sam. 24. 14; chap. 16. 9.

**shalt eat bread at my table**—A common mark of honor in oriental countries. See 1 Kings 2. 7; 2 Kings 25. 29. The physician Democedes, who cured Darius, was made "a member of the king's table;" and Histæus of Miletus was invited to come up to Susa and be Darius' "messenger-companion."—*Cambridge Bible*.

What more could David do for one incapacitated by his infirmity for the employments of active life? and it was done, not grudgingly nor with cold reserve, but with the heartfelt tenderness which made him desire to have always near him this living memorial of his lost friend. A less noble mind might have shrunk from thus keeping before the public eye, in connection with himself, the true heir of the house of Saul; especially as, though lame himself, Mephibosheth had a son who would eventually inherit whatever claims his father might be supposed to possess. But in the large heart of David there was found no room for such low suspicions and mean misgivings. God had promised to perpetuate the royal power in his house—and what had he to fear? Mephibosheth was the son of his heart's friend—what could he suspect?—*Kitto*.

**8. He bowed himself**—Though he was *lame of both his feet and could not stand*, yet he is able to bow down before him, and thus *is exalted* to privileges transcending the glory of those who were stronger than he—even of his father Saul himself, so famed for his stature and strength, so confident and vain-glorious, and so miserable in his fall.—*Wordsworth*. **Look upon such a dead dog**—The wild dogs of the East, which still abound in every town, are the natural objects of contempt and dislike.—*Bishop Hervey*. **As I am**—The strongest deivable hyperbole of unworthiness and degradation; for in a dead dog the vileness of a corpse is added to the vileness of a dog.—*Kitto*.

There is no more certain way to glory and advancement than a lowly dejection of ourselves. He that made himself a dog, and therefore fit only to lie under the table, yea, a dead dog, and therefore fit only for the ditch, is raised up to the table of a king; his seat shall be honorable, yea royal; his fare delicious, his attendance noble.

10 Thou therefore, and thy sons, and thy servants, shall till the land for him, and thou shalt bring in *the fruits*, that thy master's son may have food to eat; but Mephib'o-sheth thy master's son shall eat bread always at my table. Now Zi'ba<sup>10</sup> had fifteen sons and twenty servants.

11 Then said Zi'ba unto the king,

<sup>9</sup> Chap. 16. 4; 19. 29; Isa. 32. 8.—<sup>10</sup> Chap. 19. 17.

How much more will our gracious God lift up our heads unto true honor before men and angels if we can be sincerely humbled in his sight!—*Bishop Hall*.

**9. Thy master's son**—Ziba had, doubtless, been accustomed to regard and call both Saul and Jonathan master. The word *son* is also often used where grandson, or even a more remote descendant, is intended.—*M. S. Terry*. **All that pertained to Saul**—Saul's family estate, which had fallen to David in right of his wife, (Numbers 27. 8,) or been forfeited to the crown by Ishbosheth's rebellion, (chap. 12. 8,) was provided (verse 11, also chap. 19. 29) for enabling him to maintain an establishment suitable to his rank; and Ziba appointed steward to manage it, on the condition of receiving one half of the produce in remuneration of his labor and expense, while the other moiety was to be paid as rent to the owner of the land. Chap. 19. 29.—*R. Jamieson*.

**10. Thou . . . shalt till the land**—This arrangement suggests that Ziba was already in occupation of the land, so that the only change to him would be that Mephibosheth would now receive the fruits instead of David.—*Cambridge Bible*. **That thy master's son may have food**—Although Mephibosheth himself ate daily as a guest at the king's table, he had to make provision, as a royal prince, for the maintenance of his own family and servants, as he had children according to verse 12 and 1 Chron. 8. 34, *sqq.*—*Keil and Delitzsch*. **Fifteen sons and twenty servants**—The mention of his sons and the slaves in his house was to show that Mephibosheth would be honored with an equipage "as one of the king's sons."—*R. Jamieson*.

**11. Then said Ziba**—Ziba's relation to this event is suggestive of the thought that perhaps he had taken possession of Saul's estates in the confusion of the revolution, and afterward had been permitted to hold them, it may be paying rental to David as the successor of Saul. At the time of Absalom's conspiracy Ziba managed to convey the impression that he remained loyal,

According <sup>11</sup> to all that my lord the king hath commanded his servant, so shall thy servant do. As for Me-phib'o-sheth, said the king, he shall eat at my table, as one of the king's sons.

12 And Me-phib'o-sheth had a young son, whose <sup>12</sup> name was Mi'cha.

<sup>11</sup> Chap. 16. 1-4; 19. 24-30. Prov. 12. 17. —<sup>12</sup> 1 Chron. 8. 34.

and that Mephibosheth had joined the rebellion. His accusation against his master was probably false, though if it were wholly so it is difficult to see why David should have permitted him to retain half of a property which was another's, whom he had robbed by false accusation. Compare 2 Sam. 16. 1-4, and 19. 24-30. As for Mephibosheth, said the king—There is nothing to warrant the insertion of the words "said the king," nor can the words be Ziba's assertion that he would himself have entertained Mephibosheth royally. It remains to follow the LXX. in reading at David's table for "at my table," and to take the clause along with the next two verses as the narrator's conclusion of the story thus: "So Mephibosheth did eat at David's table, as one of the king's sons."—*Cambridge Bible*.

**Eat at my table**—As men do not sit down at table with their wives and children in the East, this constant dining at court was a distinction unaccompanied by any of the drawbacks it would bring to us.—*Kitto*.

Here also we see that the "sure mercies of David" overflowed on the faithful and humble-minded in the family of Saul. Mephibosheth, the son of Jonathan, was admitted to partake in the royal prerogatives of David's son, and to sit continually at David's table; and so it will be with the Jews: when they are Mephibosheths in faith and humility they will be Mephibosheths in honor, they will be admitted to share in the glory of the True David in the Church militant here and triumphant hereafter.—*Wordsworth*.

12, 13. **Micha**—Called *Micah* in 1 Chron. 8. 35, where it appears that the posterity of Jonathan continued through many generations.—*M. S. Terry*. Who had a numerous offspring, (1 Chron. 8. 34, 35; 9. 40,) and so the house of Saul sprouted up and flourished afresh from one who had seemed without help and hope, but being received into David's favor, was endued with new life. Such will the Hebrew nation be when restored to God's favor in Christ.—*Wordsworth*. **Dwelt in Jerusalem**—His loyalty remained unshaken, though much contested, both at the time and afterward; and we part from him on the banks of the Jordan, where, with all the

And all that dwelt in the house of Zi'ba were servants unto Me'phib'o-sheth.

13 So Me-phib'o-sheth dwelt in Jeru'sa-lem; for he did <sup>13</sup> eat continually at the king's table; and was lame on both his feet.

<sup>13</sup> Chap. 19. 23, 36; 2 Kings 25. 29; Jer. 52. 31, 34.

signs of Eastern grief, he met David on his return from the defeat of Absalom.—*Dean Stanley*. **And was lame**—This is repeated again from verse 3, probably because the future incidents of Mephibosheth's life (16. 1-4; 19. 24-30) turn upon his lameness.—*Bishop Hare*.

There is a remnant of Israel which has already bowed before the divine David. There is also a remnant which will one day bow before him. Israel itself is like Mephibosheth. It is lame in both its feet; its lameness is due to its fall, consequent on the apostasy of its fathers. It supposed that it could walk before God by its own strength; but it can do nothing to help itself. "It is lame on both its feet," the words are emphatically repeated by the sacred historian. Ver. 13. But it will one day become sensible of its own lameness, and then will recover its place in God's favor. Even now the divine David remembers his own promise, ratified by oath to the fathers. He remembers his own love to the Hebrew Jonathan, whose love to him was a deep and intense love, "a wonderful love, passing the love of women." 2 Sam. 1. 26. He desires to show the *kindness of God* to their soul. He searches after them. Let them come to Christ, as Mephibosheth did to David, in faith and humility. Let them divest themselves of all proud notions of their own righteousness. Let them fall on their face before the Divine Son of David, and do him reverence.—*Wordsworth*.

#### Authorities to be Consulted

Stanley's On the Jewish Church, lectures 21 and 24. Kitto's Daily Bible Illustrations, 35th week. Geikie's Hours with the Bible, vol. iii, chap. 10. Bishop Hall's Contemplations, book 15. Sermons by C. H. Spurgeon. Foster's Cyclopaedia of Illustrations, [numbers marked with a star refer to poetical quotations,] ver. 1: 2466, 2469; 2: 2400; 7: 9217, 10090; 8: \*2026, 5555.

#### Practical Thoughts.

##### [THE TRUE FRIEND.]

1. There is a Friend, who, in his lofty state, yet thinks of the lowly and seeks them out. Ver. 1.

2. This Friend finds man in a low condition, poor, depressed, bereft, helpless. Vers. 1-3.

3. This Friend sends for us in all our poverty and helplessness, and invites us to his throne. Vers. 4, 5.

4. This Friend, when we approach him with fear, meets us with encouragement and abundant welcome. Ver. 6.

5. This Friend honors and blesses us, not for our own worthiness, but because of his love for us. Ver. 7.

6. This Friend restores to us the royal possession which we have forfeited by our rebellion. Vers. 9, 10.

7. This Friend invites us to a companionship at his own table, and leads us to the banqueting-house.

8. This Friend deserves our love, our loyal gratitude, and our faithful service.

### Sermon Outline.

BY REV. H. LIEBHART, D.D.

INTRODUCTION.—Our text presents two leading characters—an exalted king, who has conquered his enemies, and who stands at the height of his power; and a poor, unknown cripple, who has a reverential awe of his sovereign. And yet between the two there is a strong tie—the pure and true friendship of Jonathan and David.

#### Theme: True Friendship.

##### 1. *It is a holy affection which never dies.*

Jonathan and David were not only friendly acquaintances; they were not only fond of each other; they were not allied to each other by common interests or selfishness. No: they belonged to each other, loved each other. They were pious youths united by the love of God, and, therefore, their friendly affections were tender and so strong that not even death could erase the fond recollections. Many years had passed since Jonathan's death, and yet to David he was not dead. He still lived in his memory and his heart. Death had only made the

sacred ties firmer, and brought him in closer communion with his departed friend.

So lasting and alive is true friendship that it strives to obtain tokens of remembrance; it actuates a desire to assist those who sustain any relationship to our friends. "Is there yet any one of the house of Saul?" said David; "if so, I should like to show him some kindness for Jonathan's sake." David transmitted his never-dying friendship to any one of Jonathan's loved ones.

There is much selfishness, misanthropy, pessimism in this world, but, thank God! also such a thing as true, tender friendship stronger than death.

##### 2. *It is entirely disinterested.*

The king on the throne could not have had any personal motive in assisting a poor scion of the house of Saul. David had reason to shun and avoid the descendants of Saul. None of them, neither Mephibosheth nor another, made application—they dreaded the king. But for Jonathan's sake, true, royal friendship extends its helping, disinterested hand to a lame youth of no particular merit whatever. Whether Mephibosheth will thank or not, whether he will show himself worthy or not, the true friend of his father invites him with loving-kindness. That heart which cried once, "I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan," is to-day as disinterested as ever. Friendship, like charity, seeketh not its own.

##### 3. *True friendship is active.*

David not only shows a feeling heart, not only inquires of the house of Saul, but he attests his kindly feelings and intentions by the act.

(1) The kind king fetched Mephibosheth out of the house of Machir, the son of Ammiel, from Lo-debar. (2) He restored him to his patrimonial inheritance. "Come," says he, "and walk the fields and meadows of your father, live in the house of thy mother, the acres and thy home shall be thy own," etc. (3) The king exalted the lame youth to distinguished honors, and gave him suitable attendants. "Mephibosheth shall eat at my table," said he, "as one of the king's sons, and those of the house of Ziba shall be his servants."

DAVID'S REPENTANCE.—Psa. 51. 1-19.

GOLDEN TEXT.—My sin is ever before me.—Psa. 51. 3.

TIME.—B. C. 1034.

CONNECTING LINK.—David's sin with Bathsheba. 2 Sam. 11. 1-27.

INTRODUCTION. *The circumstances.*—The psalm is said in the inscription to have been written just at the time when Nathan came to rebuke him for the terrible guilt which he had contracted. This is confirmed by the strongest internal evidence: of no other person known from Holy Scripture can it be affirmed that he was a devout man before and after a grievous fall, that his fall involved blood-guiltiness, that the crime was unpunished by law, and that he was restored to God's favor. The depth of penitence and the fervor of devotion are specially characteristic of David.—*Canon Cook.* It is a striking distinction of the Bible that, while it dismisses in a few verses the story of David's victories, which, if won by an Egyptian or Assyrian monarch, would have been the great theme of their chroniclers, it dwells with



sad detail on the lesson of his fall. It is his glory that he avoided to so great an extent the sins to which his position might so easily have led him; but he did not wholly bear himself as became his nobler characteristics. The higher the glory he enjoyed the greater the necessity to guard against temptation; but though he did so for the most part, one terrible sin is recorded against him; that connected with Uriah and Bathsheba. That he should have sinned like other men was only to be expected; but how nobly free and morally healthy must a people have been to value the dignity, purity, and sacredness of the family so highly as to insert in its public records this sad blemish in the life of their greatest hero; a king wielding absolutely the power of life and death.—*C. Geikie. Authorship.*—It is a marvel, but nevertheless, a fact, that writers have been found to deny David's authorship of this psalm; but their objections are frivolous; the psalm is David-like all over. It would be far easier to imitate Milton, Shakespeare, or Tennyson, than David. His style is altogether *sui generis*, and it is as easily distinguishable as the touch of Raphael, or the coloring of Rubens. *Spurgeon. Divisions.*—We discern in *Psa. 51* four parts of decreasing length. The first part, verses 3-11, contains the prayer for remission of sin; the second, verses 12-15, the prayer for renewal; the third, verses 16-19, the vow of spiritual sacrifices; the fourth, verses 20, 21, the intercession for all Jerusalem. The divine name, *Elohim*, occurs five times, and is appropriately distributed throughout the psalm.—*Dulitzsch.*

1 Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy loving-kindness; according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions.

<sup>1</sup> Col. 2, 14.—<sup>2</sup> Heb. 9, 14; 1 John

**1. Have mercy**—The prayer for forgiveness reposes wholly upon the grace of God. David does not yet venture to use the name of Jehovah; that will come when the prayer has been answered. In this psalm the cloud hangs over the sanctuary, though the divine light shines through it, and inspires hope. **Mercy, loving-kindness**—The first word is strong; it implies kindness, graciousness; but the second is much stronger; it speaks of deep, tender, parental sympathy, of an abundance and overflow of those feelings which assure the penitent child of his mother's unutterable love, of her yearnings for his return to her bosom. So great a sin could not be blotted out but by a great outpouring of grace.—*Canon Cook.* **The multitude of thy tender mercies**—In all godly sorrow there is hope. Sorrow without hope may be remorse or despair, but it is not repentance. Hence the true penitent always looks to the loving-kindness of God even at the very time when he feels most deeply how he has sinned against it. The cry on his lips is "My Father" even when he confesses "I am no more worthy to be called thy son."—*Perowne.* **Blot out**—Cancel, obliterate, as one did when he turned the smooth end of his writing instrument and passed it over the tablet of wax on which an account was charged.—*Plumcr.* **My transgressions**—No sin ever stands alone; each single transgression is the mother of many transgressions; each is a root of bitterness whence spring many bitter branches, so that we cannot confess one sin without confessing many.—*Perowne.*

2 Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.

3 For I acknowledge my transgressions; and my sin is ever before me.

1, 7; Rev. 1, 5.—<sup>2</sup> Psa. 32, 5.

The riches, the power, and the glory of a kingdom can neither prevent nor remove the torment of sin, which puts the monarch and the beggar upon a level.—*Horne.*

Two things are necessary to true penitence: (1) That we recognize sin and then likewise grace; (2) That we know and believe that God desires to be gracious and merciful to all who believe in Christ.—*Luther.*

**2. Wash me thoroughly**—Literally, "multiply to wash me." The washing must be thorough, it must be repeated, therefore he cries, "Multiply to wash me." The dye is in itself immovable, and I, the sinner, have lain long in it till the crimson is ingrained; but, Lord, wash, and wash, and wash again, till the last stain is gone, and not a trace of my defilement is left. The hypocrite is content if his garments be washed, but the true supplicant cries, "Wash me."—*Spurgeon.* **Cleanse me from my sin**—The original word signifies to miss an aim, as an archer does who shoots short of his mark, beyond or beside it. It is also used for treading aside, or tripping, in the act of walking. In a spiritual sense it denotes deviation from a rule, whether by omission or commission.—*Thomas T. Bidolph.*

**3. For**—This particle expresses, not the reason why God should forgive him, but the reason why he asks for forgiveness, namely, his own sense and acknowledgment of his sin.—*Perowne.* **I acknowledge**—Literally, *I will know.* The word is expressive of clear internal perception of sin. The willingness to know sin is the first

4 Against 'thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done *this* evil <sup>5</sup> in thy sight; <sup>6</sup>that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, *and* be clear when thou judgest.

<sup>4</sup> Gen. 39. 9; Lev. 5. 19.—<sup>5</sup> Luke 15. 21.—<sup>6</sup> Rom. 3. 4.

step toward repentance, and the open expression of this knowledge is the exact idea of *acknowledged, confess*.—*F. G. Hibbard*. **My sin is ever before me**—Not the terror of God's wrath and judgment, but the deep sorrow for despite done to God's love and goodness, is the feeling uppermost. David dreads not punishment, but separation from God.—*Perowne*.

It is hard to believe the sin we do our own. One lays the blame on circumstances; another on those who tempted; a third on Adam, Satan, or his own nature, as if it were not himself. "The fathers have eaten a sour grape, and the children's teeth are set on edge." In this psalm no such self-exculpation. Personal accountability throughout. No source of evil suggested or conceived but his own guilty will; no shifting of responsibility; no pleading of a passionate nature, or royal exposure, as peculiar. "I have sinned." "I acknowledged *my* transgression; *my* sin is ever before me.—*Robertson*.

4. **Against thee, thee only**—Face to face with God he sees nothing else, can think of nothing else, but his presence forgotten, his holiness outraged, his love scorned. Therefore he must confess and be forgiven by God before he could even think of the wrong done to his neighbor.—*Perowne*. From the relation of all souls to God every sin against man lies primarily against God, *to the end*, or final consequence, that God, who is the supreme and ultimate Judge of all human conduct, may be justified in his sentence upon the wicked.—*F. G. Hibbard*. **That thou mightest**, etc.—That is, David confesses his guilt unreservedly, in order that he may admit the justice of whatever sentence God may pronounce. "**Justified**" is taken in the true forensic sense of being just in fact and appearance, of being, and of being acknowledged to be, righteous. This recognition of God's righteousness is the first and most certain proof that a man is in a true position, and is capable of justification.—*Canon Cook*. **Clear when thou judgest**—Paul's explanation of this passage is, that the sinfulness of man displays in a striking contrast the holiness of God; or, as the apostle says, "Let God be true, and every man a liar." The universal sinfulness of man displays the unique sinlessness of God. It shows that God,

5 Behold, <sup>7</sup>I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother <sup>a</sup>conceive me.

6 Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward part; and in the hidden *part* thou shalt make me to know wisdom.

<sup>7</sup> Job 14. 4; John 3. 6; Rom. 5. 12; Eph. 2. 3.—<sup>a</sup> Warm me.

and God alone, is qualified to judge, and that man is inexcusable if he presumes to pronounce judgment on the doings of God.—*Wordsworth*.

5. **Shapen in iniquity**—The verb rendered "shapen" simply denotes the being born.—*F. G. Hibbard*. **In sin did my mother**—David's mother was the Lord's handmaid, he was born in chaste wedlock, of a good father, and he was himself "the man after God's own heart;" and yet his nature was as fallen as that of any other son of Adam, and there only needed the occasion for the manifesting of that sad fact.—*Spurgeon*.

He lays on himself the blame of a tainted nature instead of that of a single fault; not a murder only, but of a murderous nature.—*Calvin*.

I believe David to speak here of what is commonly called *original sin*; the propensity to evil which every man brings into the world with him, and which is the fruitful source whence all transgression proceeds.—*Adam Clarke*.

6. **Thou desirest truth**—Uprightness of heart: that very uprightiness and integrity which David and other of the Old Testament saints assert elsewhere, but in which, now under deep conviction of his sinfulness, he feels himself to be so deficient.—*Perowne*. **Inward parts . . . hidden part**—Literally, *the reins and the covered parts*, two synonymous words which, in Hebrew psychology, correspond to the New Testament phrase "*inner man*" or "*inward part*," (Luke 11. 39; Rom. 7. 22; 2 Chron. 4. 16; Eph. 3. 16,) and must here be understood generically of the entire spiritual and psychical nature of man.—*F. G. Hibbard*. Truth in the reins is an upright nature in man's deepest inward parts; and, in fact, since the reins are accounted as the seat of the tenderest feelings, in man's inmost experience and perception, in his most secret life, both of conscience and of mind. *Psa. 16. 7.—Delitzsch*. **Hidden part . . . wisdom**—David assigns *inward part* as the seat of *truth* and *wisdom*, which determines it to be the seat of thought and purpose as well as feeling. The Hebrews had no metaphysical system of thought, but located the mind or sensibilities phenomenally; that is, according to their sensible effect on the nerves.—*F. G. Hibbard*.

7 Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

8 Make me to hear joy and gladness; that the bones which thou hast broken may rejoice.

9 Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities.

\* Acts 15. 9; Eph. 2. 10.—Or, a constant spirit.—9 Gen. 4. 14.

7. **Purge me with hyssop**—That is, as with hyssop, which was used in Levitical purifications, as after touching a corpse, (Num. 19. 18,) and more especially for leprosy. See Lev. 14. 4-6. David regarded his sinfulness as a moral leprosy, for which the cure was symbolized by the blood sprinkled with the hyssop.—*Canon Cook*. **Hyssop**—The *luscif* or *usaf*, the asper plant, the bright green creeper which climbs out of the fissures of the rocks in the Sinaitic valleys, has been identified, on grounds of great probability, with the "hyssop" or *ezob* of Scripture; and thus explains whence came the green branches used, even in the desert, for sprinkling the water over the tents of the Israelites.—*Dean Stanley*. **I shall be clean**—And history scarcely records a grander instance of the change of blood-red sin into dazzling whiteness than this, that out of the subsequent marriage of David and Bathsheba sprang Solomon, the most richly blessed of all kings.—*Inlitzsch*.

8. **Hear joy and gladness**—In the assurance of forgiveness, for which David prays. **The bones which thou hast broken**—These are regarded as constituting the strength and frame-work of the body, the crushing of the bones being a very strong figure, denoting the most complete prostration, mental and bodily.—*Perowne*. The pain of a heart truly broken for sin may well be compared to that of a broken bone; and it is the same Spirit, who, as a Spirit of bondage, smites and wounds, and, as a Spirit of adoption, heals and binds up.—*Henry*. **May rejoice**—At the resurrection of the body this petition will be granted, in a literal sense, when the "bones," that are moldered into dust, shall "rejoice and flourish as an herb." Isa. 66. 14.—*Horne*.

9. **Hide thy face**—Do not only forgive, but forget, my sins. See Ps. 32. 1. If we wish that God should turn his face from our sins, our own face must be turned toward them. See verse 3. We must not hide them if we wish that they should be hidden by him.—*Wordsworth*. **Blot out**—See note on verse 1, last clause.

10. **Create in me**—The spiritual work, heart renewal, is constantly before the royal penitent,

10 Create \* in me a clean heart, O God; and renew <sup>b</sup> a right spirit within me.

11 Cast me not away <sup>c</sup> from thy presence; and take not thy <sup>d</sup> Holy Spirit from me.

12 Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me *with thy free* <sup>e</sup> Spirit:

<sup>f</sup> Ezek. 36. 27; Rom. 8. 9; Eph. 4. 30.—<sup>g</sup> 2 Cor. 3. 17.

and this is nothing less than a new *creation*. The word create is the strongest known in the Hebrew for bringing into being that which did not before exist, as Gen. 1. 1. Comp. Eph. 2. 10; 4. 24; and "new creation," 2 Cor. 5. 17; Gal. 6. 15.—*F. G. Hibbard*. **A clean heart**—The whole spiritual being of the man had, as it were, fallen into a chaos. The pure heart and the childlike feeling of confidence could only return as a new creation.—*Perowne*. **Renew a right spirit**—A *steadfast spirit*. One not disquieted by fears or doubts, a mind stayed on the Lord, and, therefore, kept in perfect peace. See Isa. 26. 3.—*Canon Cook*.

If there is any greater exercise of power than that which brought all things out of nothing, it is that which brings a clean thing out of an unclean, or makes a saint out of a sinner.—*Plumer*.

11. **Cast me not away**—He realizes his official, as well as his private, sin, and its guilt and evil consequences, and whilst imploring a pure heart and steadfast spirit, he prays that he may remain in the presence and favor of God, and retain and enjoy the Holy Spirit, and the grace with which he had been anointed by Samuel.—*C. A. Briggs*. **Take not thy Holy Spirit**—That Spirit which came upon David at his anointing as king, (1 Sam. 16. 13,) and by which he had achieved all his victories, he had now forfeited, and he deprecates the justice which would take back the forfeiture. With the divine rejection, as with Saul, would follow that by the people of Israel. 1 Sam. 16. 14; 2 Kings 24. 24. The order follows in moral sequence no less than in judicial judgment—loss of the favor of God, loss of providential rank and honor, loss of the soul.—*F. G. Hibbard*. The petition expresses the holy fear of the man who has his eyes open to the depth and iniquity of sin, lest at any moment he should be left without the successor of that Divine Spirit who was the only source in him of every good thought, of every earnest desire, of every constant resolution.—*Perowne*.

12. **Restore . . . uphold**—The idea of "uphold," here, is to confirm, render permanent.

13 Then will I teach transgressors thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto thee.

14 Deliver me from <sup>c</sup> blood-guiltiness, O God, thou God of my salvation; and my tongue shall sing aloud of thy righteousness.

<sup>c</sup> Bloods.—*d* Or,

David desires that the restored state be sustained and abiding. This is the point of the petition. But he has not in himself the elements of this stability. God only can "restore the joys of salvation," and he alone can cause him to stand firm in this restored life.—*F. G. Hibbard*. **With thy free Spirit**—The word rendered *free*, (Heb. *nedibah*,) signifies *liberal, generous, magnificent, noble*, as opposed to *servile* and *niggardly*. See Exod. 25. 2; 35. 5, 21; 1 Chron. 29. 9, 17; 2 Chron. 29. 31; Isa. 32. 5, 8. It here signifies that Divine Spirit who gives ungrudgingly, (see James 1. 5,) and which, when he works without let or hindrance on man's spirit, excites it to the free, cheerful, and joyful obedience of a loving son, as contrasted with the forced service of a fearful slave. Gal. 4. 6, 7.—*Wordsworth*.

13. Then will I teach—The Hebrew implies a longing: I would fain teach transgressors thy ways, those who, like me, have committed heinous sins. Such a desire is one of the surest signs of spiritual repentance.—*Canon Cook*. **Teach . . . thy ways**—How he fulfilled this promise is shown in some of his subsequent psalms, as Psalms 32, 40, and 103, which should be read in this connection.—*F. G. Hibbard*. **Sinners shall be converted**—The form is optative, and expresses that which he desires to do as an evidence of his gratitude, and as knowing how greatly his sin must have been a stumbling-block to others. Terrible had been the fruit of his sin, not only in the wasting of his own soul, but in the injury done to others. Terrible was his punishment in witnessing this; and, therefore, the more anxious is he, though he cannot undo his own sin, to heal the breach, and repair the evil of sin in other souls.—*Perowne*.

The man who is himself a saved sinner can best point out the way of salvation to sinners, can show the joys of pardon, and can persuade others to enter the gates of Gospel grace.

Unto thee—Doubtless this psalm and the whole story of David have produced, for many ages, the most salutary results in the conversion

15 O Lord, open thou my lips; and my mouth shall show forth thy praise.

16 For thou desirest not sacrifice, <sup>d</sup> else would I give it; thou delightest not in burnt offering.

17 The sacrifices of God *are* a broken

that I should give it.

of transgressors, and so evil has been overruled for good.—*Spurgeon*.

14. From blood-guiltiness—Lit., "bloods;" the plural is exclusively used to denote bloodshed or murder: thus, Gen. 4. 10, "The blood of Uriah cries for vengeance like that of Abel." David cannot have a free spirit unless God silences the accuser.—*Canon Cook*. **Sing aloud**—Thus, after forgiveness, according to the law of Moses, comes the offering of praise and thanksgiving.—*F. G. Hibbard*. **Thy righteousness**—Why is this attribute of God especially mentioned as the subject of praise? Because the righteousness of God is that attribute according to which he gives to every one his own, to those who, with repentance and faith turn to him, the forgiveness which they ask, and which he has promised to bestow. Hence John says, If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just (or righteous) to forgive us our sins.—*Perowne*.

Honest penitents do not fetch a compass and confess their sins in an elegant periphrasis, but they come to the point, call a spade a spade, and make a clean breast of all. What other course is rational in dealing with the Omniscient?—*Spurgeon*.

15, 16. Open thou—Or, *Thou wilt open*; his lips have been closed by guilt; when the conscience is freed, prayers and thanksgivings will flow from it freely and copiously.—*Canon Cook*. **Desirest not sacrifice**—David is speaking of personal guilt; that, he feels, cannot be cleansed by sacrifice. God has no pleasure in sacrifices offered in place of inward contrition.—*Canon Cook*. The external rite availed nothing without the hearty and humble self-surrender of the penitent spirit.

17. The sacrifices of God—That is, those sacrifices which God really approves, and which are the results of his own work. His fatherly chastisement breaks the spirit, which he then pities and accepts.—*Canon Cook*. **A broken and a contrite heart**—The inward part of a man is said to be broken and crushed when his sinful nature is broken, his ungodly self slain, his impenetrable hardness softened, his haughty

spirit; a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.

18 Do good in thy good pleasure unto Zion: build thou the walls of Je-ru'-sa-lem.

19 M. L.

vain-glorying brought low—in line, when he is in himself become as nothing, and when God is every thing to him. *Delitzsch*.

Joshua ben Levi (B. *Sanhedrin*, 43 b.) says: At the time when the temple was standing, whoever brought a burnt-offering received the reward of it, and whoever brought a meat-offering, the reward of it; but the lowly was accounted by the Scriptures as one who offered every kind of sacrifice at once.—*Delitzsch*.

18. Do good . . . unto Zion—As a king he feels he has exposed his people and kingdom, no less than himself, to judgments, and these public calamities had been sternly foretold by Nathan, 2 Sam. 12. 10-12. They must suffer with him; yea, through their suffering the king more profoundly suffers.—*F. G. Hibbard*. On Zion, see Lesson 1, verse 7, notes. Build thou the walls—This and the following verse are supposed by most of the later commentators, and by some of an earlier age, to have been added during, or immediately after, the Babylonish captivity; but the connection of thought appears sufficiently clear and satisfactory. David has just declared that he puts no trust in sacrifices offered for the expiation of his personal guilt; for himself he has but one offering, (unfeigned repentance,) but as a king he feels differently; he can promise abundant sacrifices if in his goodness God will complete (that is, enable him to complete) the building of the walls of Jerusalem.—*Canon Cook*. Of Jerusalem—Jerusalem is a name for the Church, parallel to Zion. By his sin he had weakened the cause of religion. He asks God to repair the breaches which his own misconduct had made.—*Plumer*. David feared lest his guilt should render him as an *Achan* in the congregation of Israel; and, therefore, he concluded his penitential prayer with entreating God to protect and prosper Zion.—*Scott*.

When we have most business of our own, and of greatest importance at the throne of grace, yet then we must not forget to pray for the Church of God; nay, our Master has taught us in our daily prayers to begin with that, *Hallowed be thy name, Thy kingdom come*.—*Henry*.

19. Sacrifices of righteousness—The construct or genitive relations of the nouns yield the sense of *sacrifice in order to justification*—ex-

19 Then shalt thou be pleased with  
12 the sacrifices of righteousness, with  
burnt offering, and whole burnt offering:  
then shall they offer bullocks upon thine  
altar.

3, 3.

piatory sacrifices. So the word denotes verse 16. In perfect analogy with this construction, the phrase *sacrifices of thanksgiving*, the exact opposite, occurs; that is, *sacrifices for*, or *to express thanksgiving for*, justifying favor received.—*F. G. Hibbard*. With burnt-offering—The "sacrifices of righteousness" were for expiation or atonement; the "burnt-offering" "was the sacrifice of entire, full, unconditional surrender to Jehovah." The former for justification, the latter expressive of complete self-consecration. In the burnt-offering the entire animal was burned upon the altar, indicating entire surrender to God. Offer bullocks—We bring not the Lord our least things—our doves and pigeons; but we present him with our best possessions—our bullocks.—*Spurgeon*.

David had fallen into sins enough; blackest crimes; there was no want of sins. And thereupon the unbelievers sneer and ask, Is this your man according to God's heart? The sneer, I must say, seems to me but a shallow one. What are faults? what are the outward details of a life, if the inner secret of it, the remorse, temptations, true, often-baffled, never-ended struggle of it, be forgotten? "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." Of all acts is not, for a man, *repentance* the most divine? The deadliest sin, I say, were that same supercilious consciousness of no sin; that is death: the heart so conscious is divorced from sincerity, humility, and fact; is dead: it is "pure" as dead, dry sand is pure. David's life and history, as written for us in these psalms of his, I consider to be the truest emblem ever given of a man's moral progress and warfare here below. All earnest souls will ever discern in it the faithful struggle of an earnest human soul toward what is good and best. Struggle often baffled, sore baffled, down as into entire wreck; yet a struggle never ended; ever, with tears, repentance, true, unconquerable purpose, begun anew.—*T. Carlyle*.

#### Authorities to be Consulted.

For the circumstances under which this psalm was written, see Geikie's Hours with the Bible, iii, chap. 11. Stanley's Jewish Church, lecture, Pulpit Analyst, v, 304. Glad Tidings, (D. L. Moody's Sermons,) 473. Stems and Twigs, vol. ii, 11. Preacher's Lantern, i, 250; ii, 742. Freeman's Bible Manners and Customs, 437, 151. F. W. Robertson's Sermons; also sermons

by C. Simeon, F. D. Maurice, (Prophets and Kings, sermon 4.) Foster's Cyclopaedia of Illustrations, [numbers marked with a star refer to poetical quotations,] ver. 1: 3901, 3906; 1-3: 9147, 927, 928; 5: \*795, 4268, 4269; 6: 2608; 7: 433, \*2280, 7934; 8: 12306; 9: 229; 10: 2850, 2967; 11: 7562; 12: 253; 13: 2978; 15: 11058; 17: \*517, 1046, 10936.

### Practical Thoughts.

#### [THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS.]

1. The forgiveness of sins is made possible only by the multitude of the tender mercies of the Lord. Ver. 1.

2. The forgiveness of sins which every soul needs is a thorough cleansing, washing away all guilt. Ver. 2.

3. The forgiveness of sins is conditioned upon an honest recognition and confession of sins. Ver. 3.

4. The forgiveness of sins can only be bestowed by the one who is most wronged by sin, Almighty God. Ver. 4.

5. The forgiveness of sins can only be given to the sinner who recognizes his guilt and the justice of his punishment. Ver. 4.

6. The forgiveness of sins removes, blots out, destroys the record of guilt, and is followed by a new nature. Ver. 10.

7. The forgiven sinner cannot only praise God, but can teach his fellow-men the way of salvation. Ver. 13.

### Sermon Outline.

BY REV. H. SPELLMEYER, D.D.

Consider: I. **The Confession**; II. **The Petitions**; III. **The Vow**.

I. *In Confession* (1) frank, full acknowledgment. Strong, unequivocal terms, "transgression," "iniquity," "sin." (2) Personal responsibility, "I have done." Born with seeds of sin in his heart, (ver. 5.) Sin is not from God, Adam, or ancestry. It has an

individual character, and each one a personal accountability. (3) Confessed to God. As it were, his "only" sin against God. All sin, against society, one's neighbor, one's self, is against God, as God is against all sin. (4) Unceasing penitence, (ver. 3.) Read Psa. 32, 3, 4. Day and night accused by conscience.

II. *In the Petitions* he begs (1) Forgiveness (verse 1) on the ground of (a) God's "mercies." A multitude of sins requires "a multitude of mercies." (b) "Tender." A broken heart needs "tender mercies." He begs (2) *absolute* forgiveness. (a) Sins must be "blotted out." The record of debt must be crossed by a red line. (b) No future reference, (ver. 9.) The impenitent would be hidden from God's face. The penitent asks God to "hide his face from his sins." He begs (3) "a clean heart." Sin can be "washed" out. God will do more than pardon. He will "purge," "cleanse," and make "whiter than snow." Therefore (a) a truly saved man is saved in his *heart*. He gives his heart to God. His moral personality is filled with God's Spirit. You are not saved unless your heart is saved. (b) He is saved to the extent of a "clean heart." This comes by a Divine creation, (ver. 10.) Your heart will be clean only in so far as you surrender it to God. (c) He is saved by Christ's *atoning blood*. David uses the mode of speech common to Levitical rites—"Purge me," etc. We say "The blood cleanseth." The atonement is in both Psalms and Gospels. (d) He is not saved beyond a possibility of *spiritual declension*. The "joys of salvation" may be lost. God may "cast away from his presence." Indulging a wrong spirit may induce a "withdrawal of the Holy Spirit," (vers. 10, 11.) (e) He is *consciously* saved. David could not ask God to "restore the joy of salvation," unless conscious he had lost what once he consciously had. The 13th verse contains

III. *The Vow*. It is because God has mercy on us (ver. 1) that we are impelled to go out in mercy to others, (ver. 13.) If we would save men, we must be thoroughly saved. Have we this itness? Is the "spirit right," the "heart clean?" Have we lost the "joy of salvation?" Voice the penitent's prayer! God will not cast you away if you come! And in "the multitude of tender mercies" there is peace!

B. C. 1023.J

LESSON VI.

[Aug. 10.

ABSAKOM'S REBELLION.—2 Sam. 15. 1-14.

**GOLDEN TEXT.**—Honor thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long on the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.—Exod. 20, 12.

TIME.—B. C. 1023.

PLACES.—Jerusalem and Hebron.

CONNECTING LINKS.—(1) The sin of Amnon, 2 Sam. 13, 1-22. (2) Banishment of Absalom for the murder of his brother, Amnon, 2 Sam. 13, 23-39. (3) Return of Absalom, through the influence of Joab, 2 Sam. 14, 1-33.

INTRODUCTION.—Among the causes which led to the rebellion of Absalom, and contributed to its progress and apparent success, may be named the following: (1) The change for the worse in King David's character. He was no more the noble chieftain of earlier days, inspiring the loyal, enthusiastic service of his followers. His ambition and sensuality had weakened the respect which character alone can secure. (2) David's neglect of his kingly duties. He no longer led the army in its campaigns, nor did he "sit in the gate" to administer judgment. As a result, the affairs of the kingdom were in confusion, rights of citizens were invaded, and the spirit of discontent pervaded all classes of people. (3) The foreign wars pressed heavily upon the people with burdens of taxation, and, besides, brought in a lawless and turbulent element into the nation, ready for revolution at home when not employed in war abroad. (4) The parties in the court, jealous of each other: Joab and Bathsheba dominant over the king; mercenaries and foreigners surrounding his person; Absalom, the heir to the throne, set aside for Solomon, the child of Bathsheba. This was doubtless the actual motive for the rebellion in the mind of Absalom. (5) The jealousy of the tribe of Judah and the rivalry of other tribes. The Judahites found themselves no longer the dominant clan; the capital had been removed from Hebron to Jerusalem, really within the tribe of Benjamin. Absalom's revolt was the old tribal spirit of leadership asserting itself. (6) Underlying all was the combination of the worldly and irreligious, perhaps idolatrous, elements of the kingdom, under the lead of Absalom, against the theocratic religious influence which David's throne represented, in spite of his sins. Had Absalom succeeded, the theocratic glory of Israel would have been lost, and the Chosen People would have sunk to the level of the races around them.—*J. L. H. The spiritual teachings of the history.*—It is scarcely necessary to remind the Christian reader that in the history of the insurrection of Absalom against his father, King David, there are many points of resemblance to the rebellion of the people of God—Israel, "his first-born," against the Divine David, the King of the Jews, *Jesus Christ*. David's departure from Jerusalem; his passage over the brook Kidron; his ascent of the Mount of Olives, his tears on that mountain, the meekness of his deportment there; his tenderness for Absalom, who rebelled against him; his forbearance toward Shimei, who cursed him; the treachery of Ahithophel, his familiar friend whom he trusted—the type of Judas the traitor, in his sin and in his wretched end—these incidents bring before us some prophetic and figurative foreshadowings of the last days of our Lord's ministry: his weeping over Jerusalem, when he was on the Mount of Olives; his agony in the Garden; his betrayal, his rejection and crucifixion by the people of his own city, Jerusalem, and his prayers for those who reviled and slew him. Nor is this all. The counsel of Ahithophel comes to naught; the rebellion of Absalom is quelled, he himself is slain; and Shimei, who cursed David is humbled; David is brought back to Jerusalem in triumph, and is received by the people with joy. May we not see here a foreshadowing of Christ's resurrection and ascension, and of the discomfiture of his enemies, and of the final establishment of his kingdom?—*Wordsworth*.

1 And <sup>1</sup>it came to pass after this, that Ab'sa-lom <sup>2</sup>prepared him chariots and

horses, and fifty men to run before him.

<sup>1</sup> Chap. 12, 11.—<sup>2</sup> 1 Kings

1, 5; Prov. 11, 2; 16, 18.

1. After this—To recall Absalom without granting him a full pardon was ill-judged; to readmit him to favor after he had been irritated by two years of exclusion, without the slightest sign of repentance on his part, was fatal. The natural consequences of such treatment are recorded in the following chapters.—*Cambridge Bible.* **Absalom**—Whose name means *father of peace*; but he belied his name by his acts.—*Words-*

*worth*. He was the son of David by Maachah, the daughter of Talmai, the king of Geshur, a princess whom David had married while king of Judah. Notice that Absalom's mother was a heathen woman. **Chariots and horses**—This was assuming the state and equipage of a prince. The chariot, as the Hebrew indicates, was of a magnificent style; and the horses, a novelty among the Hebrew people, only introduced in

2 And Ab'sa-lom <sup>a</sup> rose up early, and stood beside the way of the gate: and it was so, that when any man that had a controversy <sup>a</sup> came to the king for judgment, then Ab'sa-lom called unto him, and said, Of what city art thou? And he said, Thy servant is of one of the tribes of Is'ra-el.

3 And Ab'sa-lom said unto him, See,

<sup>a</sup> Prov. 1. 16.—<sup>a</sup> To come.—<sup>b</sup> Prov. 12. 2.—<sup>b</sup> Or, none

that are as an appendage of royalty, (Psa. 32. 9; 66. 12,) formed a splendid retinue, which would make him "the observed of all observers."—*R. Jamieson.* Fifty men to run before him—Great men were accompanied in their chariots by running footmen, (8. 11; 2 Sam. 15. 1; 1 Kings 1. 5; 2 Kings 11. 6, Authorized Version, *guards*; Jer. 12. 5;) and there seems to have been always professional runners to act as messengers with armies in the field. See 2 Kings 11. 4, 6, 19.—*Bishop Hervey.*

David thinks that it is designed only to grace his court, and connives at it. Those parents know not what they do who indulge a proud humor in their children; for I have seen more young people ruined by pride than by any one lust whatsoever.—*M. Henry.*

2. Absalom rose up early—He "rose up early" in order to show his zeal and get opportunities, and such legal business is usually attended to very early in the East. Oriental ministers hold their levees at an hour when Western people of quality are not yet up.—*C. H. Toy.* Beside the way of the gate—By the side of the road leading to the gate of the king's palace, where he sat to transact business. Comp. chap. 19. 8. From this practice the sultan's government is still popularly called in Turkey "the sultan's gate," and the Sublime Porte, which is the French equivalent of *Bab-i-Humayoon*, (the high gate,) the name of the principal gate of the palace at Constantinople, is used by us for a synonym for the Turkish government.—*Cambridge Bible.* Came to the king—The policy which Absalom adopted could not have been possible but for his father's fatal neglect of the one great duty of an Eastern king—that "sitting in the gate," as he himself had done till lately, as Solomon did after him, to do judgment and justice, to hear the complaints of any, however humble, who had suffered wrong. Failing also, as he did, to appoint any representative to take his place, it was no wonder that the hearts of the people should turn to one who had the cleverness to offer his own services to fill up

<sup>a</sup> thy matters are good and right; but <sup>b</sup> there is no man deputed of the king to hear thee.

4 Ab'sa-lom said moreover, <sup>a</sup> Oh that I were made judge in the land, that every man which hath any suit or cause might come unto me, and I would do him justice!

5 And it was so, that when any man

will bear thee from the king downward.—<sup>b</sup> Judges 9. 29.

the gap which they felt so keenly.—*E. H. Plumptre.* For judgment—That is, seek justice in connection with any matter in dispute.—*Keil and Delitzsch.* Of one of the tribes—Of course, in each actual answer, the litigant named his city or tribe.—*Bishop Hervey.*

3. Thy matters are good—To flatter each man by pronouncing a favorable verdict in his case, to excite a sense of grievance and discontent by censuring the king for remissness in trying the causes brought before him by his subjects, and to suggest a sure and easy remedy for all such grievances, namely, to make Absalom king; all this, coupled with great affability and courtesy, which his personal beauty and high rank made all the more effective, were the arts by which Absalom worked his way into favor with the people, who were light and fickle as himself.—*Bishop Hervey.* No man deputed of the king—The judicial officer, who heard complainants and examined into their different causes, for the purpose of laying them before the king for settlement. Of course, the king himself could not give a hearing to every complainant, and make a personal investigation of his cause; nor could his judges procure justice for every complainant, however justly they might act, though it is possible that they may not always have performed their duty conscientiously.—*Keil and Delitzsch.*

A fit man, indeed, to be a judge, who would give judgment upon hearing one side only! For he has a bad cause, indeed, that cannot put a good color upon it when he himself has the telling of the story.—*M. Henry.*

4. O that I were made judge—We read not of Absalom's wisdom, virtue, or learning in the laws, nor had he given any proofs of his love to justice, but the contrary; yet he wishes he were a judge. Note, those are commonly most ambitious of preferment that are least fit for it; the best qualified are the most modest and self-diffident.—*M. Henry.*

5. When any man came nigh—It was usual to approach the king, or any one of high rank,



came nigh to him to do him obeisance, he put forth his hand, and took and kissed him.

6 And on this manner did Ab'sa-lom to all Is'ra-el that came to the king for judgment: so Ab'sa-lom stole the hearts of the men of Is'ra-el.

7 And it came to pass after forty years, that Ab'sa-lom said unto the king, I pray thee, let me go and pay my

vow, which I have vowed unto the Lord, in Hebron.

8 For thy servant vowed a vow while I abode at Ge'shur in Syr'i-a, saying, If the Lord shall bring me again indeed to Je-ru'sa-lem, then I will serve the Lord.

9 And the king said unto him, Go in peace. So he arose, and went to Hebron.

\* Psa. 12, 2. —† Rom. 16, 18. —‡ Forty years from David's ascent to the throne. —§ Chap. 2, 1. —¶ 1 Sam. 16, 2. —

ing, as recorded in 1 Sam. 16, 1. Or, four years from Absalom's birth. — Gen. 28, 20. — \*\* Chap. 13, 28.

with a lowly prostration, but this Absalom would not permit; raising such as proffered "obeisance" he would embrace and kiss them. — *C. Geikie*. **Kissed him**—He knew what a grace it put upon greatness to be affable and courteous, and how much it wins upon common people: had he been sincere in it, it had been his praise, but to fawn upon the people, that he might betray them, was abominable hypocrisy. — *M. Henry*.

Over-fair shows are a just argument of unsoundness; no natural face hath so clear a white and red as the painted. — *Bishop Hall*.

6. **After this manner**—Not only did the designing measures just mentioned assist him in this, but also his personal beauty. Chap. 14, 25. — *M. S. Terry*. **Stole the hearts**—That is, *deceived them*, for so the same phrase means. Gen. 31, 20, 26. Others understand *stole the affections*, got them on his side by stealth. — *Bishop Hervey*.

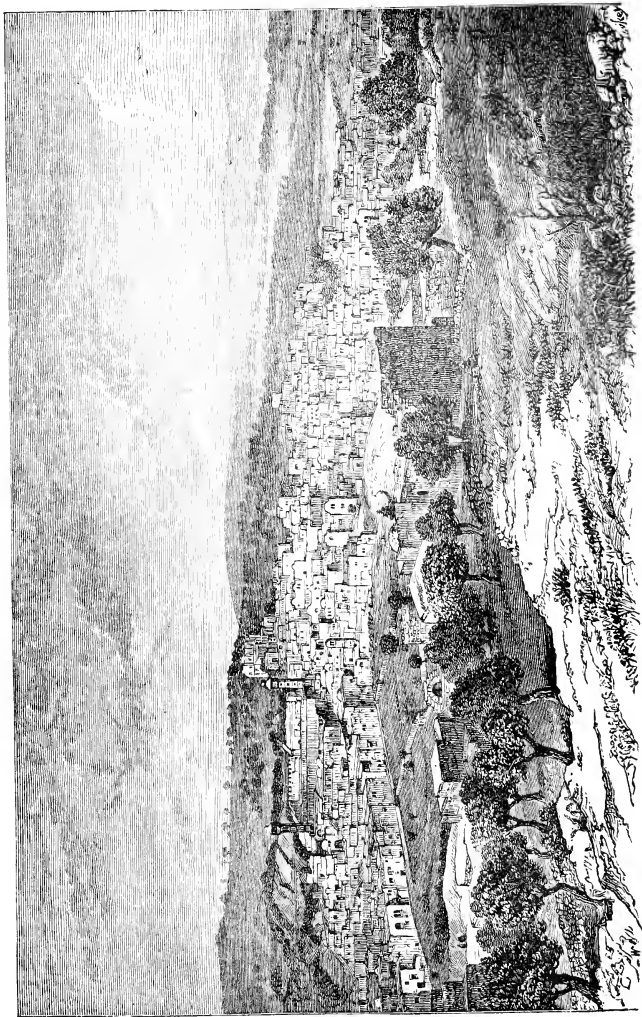
7. **After forty years**—This is an error in the text, for David reigned but forty years in all, (1 Kings 2, 11,) and he certainly had reigned many years before Absalom's rebellion. The Syriac and Arabic versions read *four years*, and with this agrees Josephus; and this, in the opinion of nearly all critics, is to be regarded as the true reading. The meaning is, four years after his restoration to royal favor. — *M. S. Terry*. Though the number *four* is more probable than *forty*, it is after all only a conjecture, though a well-supported one; the chronology must here be regarded as uncertain. — *C. H. Toy*. **My vow**—Whether Absalom ever made any such vow as he here pretends is altogether uncertain. Most probably it was only a pretext to enable him the better to carry out his plans of rebellion. — *M. S. Terry*. **In Hebron**—This, as having been the old capital of David's kingdom, and Absalom's birthplace, was well chosen. It was a natural center, had probably many inhabitants discontented at the transfer of the government

to Jerusalem, and contained many of the friends of Absalom's youth. As the place of Absalom's birth, it afforded a plausible pretext for holding there the great sacrificial feast which Absalom pretended to have vowed to hold to the glory of God. — *Bishop Hervey*.

8. **Vowed a vow**—He that struck not at murder and treason, would not make conscience of a lie to serve his purpose. — *M. Henry*. **At Geshur in Syria**—A small district or principality in Syria, east of the Jordan and north of Bashan. It was within the territory of Manasseh. Deut. 3, 14; 2 Sam. 15, 8. David had married a daughter of its king, probably for political reasons; and Absalom had fled thither after the murder of Amnon. 2 Sam. 13, 37. It was probably in the rocky region known as *El Ledjah*. — *Schaff*. **Then I will serve the Lord**—Namely, with a great sacrifice. For such it appears, from the *two hundred* invited guests from Jerusalem, (verse 11,) and from the mention of the sacrifices in verse 12, was this service. — *Bishop Hervey*.

Nothing wants now but a cloak of religion to perfect the treachery of that ungracious son, who carried peace in his name, war in his heart; and how easily is that put on! — *Bishop Hall*.

9. **The king said . . . Go in peace**—David permits himself to be deceived by the pretense of a *thank-offering in Hebron*, which Absalom might have offered as well, or better, in Jerusalem. — *Erdmann*. David was overjoyed to hear that Absalom was inclined to *serve the Lord*, and, therefore, readily gave him leave to go to Hebron, and to go thither with solemnity. — *M. Henry*. **He arose and went to Hebron**—Absalom had selected this city, probably assigning as the reason that he was born there, but really because his father, David, had been made king there, and also possibly because there may have been many persons there who had been displeased by the removal of the court to Jerusalem. — *Keil and Delitzsch*.



Hebron.

10 But Ab'sa-lom sent spies through-out all the tribes of Is'ra-el, saying, As soon as ye hear the sound of the trumpet, then ye shall say, Ab'sa-lom reigneth in He'bron.

11 And with Ab'sa-lom went two hundred men out of Je-ru'sa-lem, that were <sup>12</sup> called: and they went <sup>13</sup> in their

simplicity, and they knew not any thing.

12 And Ab'sa-lom sent for A-hith'o-phel the Gi lo-nite, <sup>13</sup> Da'vid's counsellor, from his city, even <sup>14</sup> from Gi'loh, while he offered sacrifices; and the conspiracy was strong; for the people <sup>15</sup> increased continually with Ab'sa-lom.

<sup>12</sup> 1 Sam. 9. 13; 16. 5, 6.—<sup>13</sup> Gen. 29. 5.

<sup>14</sup> Psa. 41. 9; 55. 12.—<sup>15</sup> Job. 15. 31.—<sup>16</sup> P. a. 3. 1.

**10. Absalom sent spies**—The messengers sent out are called "spies," because they were, first of all, to ascertain the feelings of the people in the different tribes, and were only to execute their commission in places where they could reckon upon support.—*Kü and Delitzsch.* **The sound of the trumpet**—As the summons was to be made by the sound of trumpets, it is probable that care had been taken to have trumpeters stationed on the heights and at convenient stations—a mode of announcement that would soon spread the news over all the country of his inauguration to the throne.—*R. Jamieson.* **Absalom reigneth in Hebron**—The choice of Hebron clearly shows that Absalom expected to find his chief support in the tribe of Judah. It is probable that the old tribal jealousies had been revived, and that Judah resented its absorption into the nation at large. Such a spirit of discontent would account for the slackness of Judah to bring back the king when the rebellion was over. Chap. 19. 11. Hebron itself, too, probably, contained many persons who were aggrieved by the removal of the court to Jerusalem.—*Cambridge Bible.*



salom's taste for giving large entertainments. See chap. 13. 23-27.—*Bishop Hervey.* No doubt Absalom hoped that many of them, finding themselves thus compromised, and seeing the number of his supporters, would decide to join him; or, failing this, they might be held as hostages.—*Cambridge Bible.*

**12. Sent for Ahithophel** In nothing was the strength of Absalom's conspiracy more manifest than in his attaching to his cause a man of so much influence as this wisest of David's counselors. His counsel was as an oracle of God, (chap. 16. 23,) and nothing seemed to disturb David more than the information that Ahithophel was among his foes. Ver. 31. The manner of Absalom's sending for him, as here stated, seems to indicate that he was already privy to the plot.—*M. S. Terry.* It has been with great probability supposed that Ahithophel was estranged from David by personal resentment for his conduct in the matter of Bathsheba and Uriah, since Eliam, Bathsheba's father, (chap. 11. 3,) was the son of Ahithophel the Gilonite. Chap. 23. 34.—*Bishop Hervey.* **The Gilonite**—Formed from *Giloh*, as *Shilonite*, (1 Kings 11. 29,) from *Shiloh*. Giloh was one of a group of cities in the mountains of Judah, to the south or south-west of Hebron. Josh. 15. 51.—*Cambridge Bible.* **While he offered sacrifices**—The meaning rather is that Absalom sent for Ahithophel to be present when he offered the sacrifices, the intention being that all who partook of the sacrifice should be bound together to prosecute the enterprise. Absalom, too, would take advantage of the excitement of the great feast to inflame the ardor of the guests, and pledge them irrevocably to his cause.—*Bishop Hervey.* **The conspiracy was strong**—The rapid accession of one place after another in all parts of the kingdom to the party of the insurgents shows that deep and general dissatisfaction existed at this time against the person and government of David.—*R. Jamieson.* When we reflect that the men who played the most important parts under Absalom—his general, Amasa, who

**11. With Absalom went two hundred men**—From their quality, reputation, and high standing, such as would create an impression that the king patronized the movement, and, being aged and infirm, was willing to adopt his eldest and noblest son to divide with him the cares and honors of government.—*R. Jamieson.* **In their simplicity**—In complete innocence, not knowing the designs of Absalom. This helped to hide from the inhabitants of Jerusalem the conspiracy of the prince.—*M. S. Terry.* **They knew not any thing**—This shows the extreme secrecy with which the conspiracy was conducted, and accounts for David's having no suspicions. We may note Ab-

13 And there came a messenger to Da'vid, saying, "The hearts of the men of Is'ra-el are after Ab'sa-lom.

14 And Da'vid said unto all his servants that were with him at Je-ru'sa-lem,

<sup>17</sup> Judges 9. 3.—<sup>19</sup> Chap. 19. 9;

was a near relation of Joab and of David, and Ahithophel, a citizen of Giloh—belonged to the tribe of Judah, and that the insurrection itself sprung into being at Hebron, the ancient capital of Judah, it becomes certain that some discontent in David's own tribe here came into play.—*Ewald*.

Ahithophel has justly been regarded as a type of the arch-traitor Judas. Even if the words "mine own familiar friend in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me," (Psa. 41. 9, quoted in John 13. 18,) were not written of Ahithophel, the parallel between his treachery and suicide and the treachery and suicide of Judas is too striking to be neglected.—*Cambridge Bible*.

The hearts of the men of Israel—The heart is considered as the seat of *will*, or the *inclination*, influenced by the intellect.—*Bishop Hervey*.

13. There came a messenger—That David observed nothing of all this till the startling news reached him that the heart of Israel was turned to Absalom, cannot be reckoned to his disadvantage, since so ancient and simple a kingdom had nothing like our modern state police; it is rather a mark of the noble-minded security, that we elsewhere see in him, that he gives so free scope to his beloved son, who might be regarded as first-born and heir-apparent, and whose quiet nature certainly even greatly pleased him.—*Ewald*.

14. Arise and let us flee—Against an insurrection so vigorous, and yet so thoroughly groundless and unintelligible, the best defense was to withdraw quietly and try to gain time; the first fright happily gotten over, sober thought would soon return in many places.—*Ewald*. Lest he . . . smite the city—David's kind nature induced him to spare Jerusalem the horrors of a siege, and the risk of being taken by assault. He probably judged, too, and rightly, that delay would be unfavorable to Absalom's plans, an opinion which Ahithophel held, too, (see chap. 17. 1, 2,) and Hushai. Chap. 17. 7-13. It must also be remembered that, in a time of peace, David had no standing army with which to resist this sudden attack from so unexpected a quarter. Possibly, too,

Arise, and let us <sup>18</sup> flee; for we shall not *else* escape from Ab'sa-lom: make speed to depart, lest he overtake us suddenly, and <sup>d</sup> bring evil upon us, and smite the city with the edge of the sword.

Psa. 3, Title.—d Thrust.

the remembrance of Nathan's prophecy (chap. 12. 10-12) tended to paralyze David's natural vigor, and incline him to gentle counsels.—*Bishop Hervey*. The conduct of David throughout, his goodness, resignation, and patience, is clearly evinced in all these trying scenes. This, as Dr. Chalmers observes, "marks strongly his subdued and right spirit, partly induced, we doubt not, by the humility of his own conscious transgressions. He fell, but it was the fall of the upright, and he rose again, submitting himself meekly, in the meantime, to the will of God."—*Killo*.

There is no single day in the Jewish history of which so elaborate account remains as of this memorable flight. There is none, we may add, that combines so many of David's characteristics: his patience, his high-spirited religion, his generosity, his calculation; we miss only his daring courage. Was it crushed, for the moment, by the weight of parental grief, or of bitter remorse?—*Dean Stanley*.

He preferred the safety of the people to his own, and was thus also a figure of Him who said in the Garden of Gethsemane, "If ye seek me, let these go their way." John 18. 8.—*Wordsworth*.

#### Authorities to be Consulted.

Stanley's Jewish Church, lecture 24. Bishop Hall's Contemplations, book xv. Killo's Daily Bible Illustrations, 38th and 39th weeks. Maurice's Prophets and Kings, sermon 4. Milman's History of the Jews, book vii. Geikie's Hours with the Bible, vol. iii, 12. Sermon by H. Belfrage, in Sacred Discourses. Bible Educator, vol. iv, 289, 290. See Lesson Helps for March, 1876, especially English Teacher's Notes in S. S. Journal. Story by Miss C. E. Gardner, Every Inch a King. Dr. Wm. Taylor's David the King. E. H. Plumptre's Biblical Studies, p. 87. Dr. Freeman's Manners and Customs, Nos. 314, 851. Foster's Cyclopaedia of Illustrations, ver. 4: 6455; 5: 9692, 8755; 6: 2855; 7: 5951; 10: 115.

#### Practical Thoughts.

[WARNINGS FROM ABSALOM'S CHARACTER.]

1. We see in Absalom the spirit of vanity, vain of his good looks and desirous of show. Ver. 1.

2. We are warned against the spirit of selfish policy, which seeks by compliments to win friends for his own base uses. Ver. 2.

3. We are warned against the spirit of worldly ambition, seeking for honor for its own sake, and not as a trust for the people's sake. Ver. 4.

4. We are warned against the spirit of flattery which utters compliments without meaning them. Vers. 4, 5.

5. We are warned against the spirit of hypocrisy, which uses religion as a cloak for the basest crimes. Vers. 7, 8.

6. We are warned against the spirit of treachery, which conspires against the established order only for selfish purposes. Vers. 10, 11.

7. We are warned against the spirit of filial impiety, a son plotting against his own father and king. Vers. 12, 13.

## B. C. 1023.]

## LESSON VII.

[Aug. 17.

## ABSALOM'S DEATH.—2 Sam. 18. 24-33.

**GOLDEN TEXT.**—Whoso curseth father or mother, let him die the death.—MARK 7. 10.

TIME.—B. C. 1023.

PLACE.—Mahanaim, in the tribe of Gad.

CONNECTING LINK.—Battle of the armies of David and Absalom "in the wood of Ephraim." 2 Sam. 18. 1-23.

INTRODUCTION.—David found a refuge at Mahanaim, on the east of Jordan, and in a place on that side of the river, called "the wood of Ephraim," a battle was fought between the two armies. The location of the battle-field remains unknown, but it may have received its name from some circumstance, as the slaughter of the Ephraimites related in Judges 12. Absalom's army greatly outnumbered that of David, and the fiercely-contested hand-to-hand struggles of antiquity were necessarily very bloody. But the victory remained with the king. Twenty thousand of the prince's men lay dead on the field, and his huge force broke into helpless rout. The pursuit, however, was even more fatal than the open field; the thickets and marshes of the woods arresting, breaking up, and bewildering the fugitives, so that escape was difficult. Among others, Absalom himself met his end. Hurrying through the tangled glades of the forest on his tall mule, one of the branches of a great terebinth, under which he chanced to pass, caught in his thick hair and held him fast, while his beast, running from under him, left him suspended in mid-air. Hearing of this, Joab himself hastened to the spot with three light javelins, and thrust them into the prince as he struggled to free himself from the bough; the ten armor-bearers, who always followed the "captain of the host," finishing the bloody work. This stern but politic and just act at once ended the war. The trumpet call to cease pursuit forthwith sounded by Joab's orders far and near, for he wished to spare the people. Absalom's death saved many lives. It had been ignoble, but his burial was still more so. Cutting down the body from the tree, Joab's men threw it as it was into a hole in the ground hard by, and piled a heap of stones over it, as a sign of bitter anger at the traitor. He had raised a pompous monument to himself in the "King's Vale," a quarter of a mile from Jerusalem to preserve his memory, his three sons having already died. But, instead of this, his crimes left his place of rest marked only by a rough cairn, like that raised over the criminal or the outcast, every passer-by afterward, doubtless, throwing a stone on the mound, as Arabs still do with detested graves.—*C. Geikie*. In the life and death of Absalom we have a picture of the fast young man. At an early period of his life a bitter hatred toward his brother soon ends in impious fratricide, and a soul thus passionate and rash can easily find its way to the crimes of an incendiary. Chap. 14, 30. Excessively vain, he loves to display his beauty, and have his praises spoken of in Israel; and this path of vain-glory leads him rapidly on to an ostentatious profligality that affects regal pomp and splendor, (chap. 15. 1.) and even erects a pillar to perpetuate his name. For a youth thus reckless and headstrong it was no difficult matter to plot treason, (even against his father's throne,) seduce the people, betray the innocent, and commit the most shameful incest. Such abandoned characters are sure to meet with a miserable end.—*M. S. Terry*.

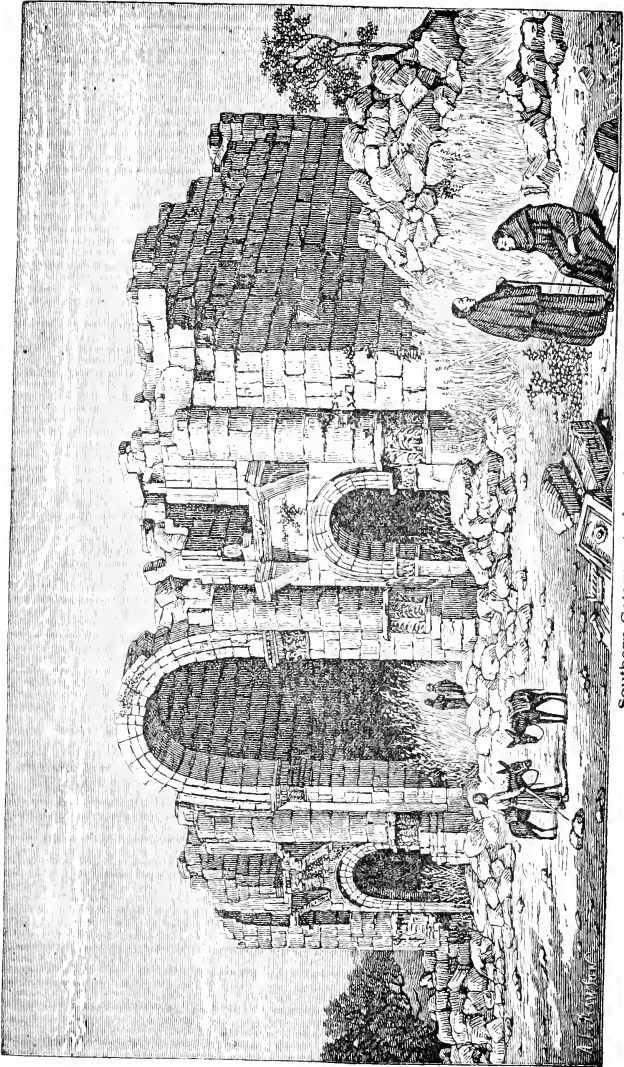
24 And Da'vid sat between <sup>1</sup>the two gates; and <sup>2</sup>the watchman went up to

<sup>1</sup>1 Sam. 4. 13.

<sup>2</sup>2 Kings 9. 17.

24. David sat—Awaiting the result of the battle at Mahanaim, a city on the east of the Jordan, between the Jabbok and the Thromax, but not yet identified. *Mahneh*, ten miles from the Jabbok, and *Jerash*, have been proposed as

its site, but proof is wanting. The engraving represents the southern gate-way to Jerash, which *may* represent the place where David sat anxious for the news of the battle and his son. **Between the two gates**—At the gate-



Southern Gateway to Jerash-Mahanaim.

the roof over the gate unto the wall, and lifted up his eyes, and looked, and beheld a man running alone.

25 And the watchman cried and told the king. And the king said, If he be alone, *there is tidings* in his mouth. And he came apace, and drew near.

26 And the watchman saw another man running: and the watchman called

<sup>a</sup> I see the running.

ways of walled cities special care was taken to increase the strength of the wall and the power of resistance, since the most formidable attacks of the enemy would probably be made there. The ordinary thickness of wall not being sufficient it was here widened or, more properly, doubled. Considerable space was included between the outer and inner wall, and to each of these walls there was a gate. It was in the room thus made that "David sat between the two gates."—*J. M. Freeman*. **The roof over the gate unto the wall**—The top of one of the towers of the outer gate. The outer gate of fortified cities was usually surmounted by a tower, in which chambers were often built. The top was a suitable station for a watchman. Such towers



Gate with Tower.

were also built into the city walls at various places.—*M. S. Terry*. **A man running alone**—Two messengers had started from the battlefield to bear the news of victory, Ahimaaz, the son of Jonathan, and "the Cushite," or Ethiopian. Ahimaaz, though starting later, was the first to arrive at Mahanaim. Assuming that the scene of battle was on the east, the paths of Ahimaaz and the Cushite cannot be described with exactness, but if it was southwest of Mahanaim and near the river, the Cushite may have struck in over the hills, while Ahimaaz took the more level northward route along the river, and then passed in to Mahanaim.—*Erdmann*.

unto the porter, and said, Behold *another* man running alone. And the king said, He also bringeth tidings.

27 And the watchman said, <sup>a</sup> Methinketh the running of the foremost is like the running of A-him'a-az the son of Za'dok. And the king said, <sup>b</sup> He is a good man, and cometh with good tidings.

<sup>a</sup> 1 Kings 1. 42.

25, 26. **If he be alone, there is tidings**—Had he been a fugitive from the battle there would have been others with him. David's sagacious character appears in the remark.—*Bishop Hervey*. **The watchman called to the porter**—It was the business of the porter to open and shut the gates at the proper time. In this case the porter, being in a convenient position below, could receive the intelligence of the watchman above and communicate the same to David.—*J. M. Freeman*. **Another man**—This was the Cushite, probably an Ethiopian slave. **Another man running**—In the East, professional runners attend upon every prince, and accompany every army, to bear messages. They are young men of great speed and endurance, having been known to run a hundred miles in a single day.

27. **The running of the foremost**—The well-trained eye of the watchman had probably discerned the messenger at a great distance, in what to a common eye would have been a confused and almost invisible speck. Now, as he approached nearer, he recognized the running of Ahimaaz. Similarly, Jehoram's watchman recognized the driving of Jehu (2 Kings 9. 20) when still at a distance.—*Bishop Hervey*. **Ahimaaz the son of Zadok**—Zadok was the chief priest of the line of Eleazar, as Abiathar was of the line of Ithamar. The two were associated in the duties of the priesthood, and were both on David's side in the war with Absalom. Ahimaaz, the son of Zadok, acted as a messenger to bring tidings of Absalom's plans to David. See chap. 15. 27; 17. 15-21. As Ahimaaz still expressed a wish to hasten to the king, even after Cushite had been sent, and could not be induced to relinquish his purpose by the repeated expostulations of Joab, the latter at length permitted him to run. And he ran so fast that he got before Cushite.—*Keil and Delitzsch*. **He is a good man**—One of the most valuable and cheering of all the tidings David ever received was borne by this messenger, (comp. chap. 15. 31, 34; and 17. 14-17,)

28 And A-him'a-az called and said unto the king, <sup>b</sup>All is well. And he fell down to the earth upon his face before the king, and said, Blessed *be* the LORD thy God, which hath <sup>c</sup>delivered up the men that lifted up their hand against my lord the king.

29 And the king said, <sup>d</sup>Is the young man Ab'sa-lom safe? and A-him'a-az answered, When Jo'ab sent the king's servant, and *me* thy servant, I saw a great tumult, but I knew not what *it was*.

30 And the king said *unto him*, Turn aside, and stand here. And he turned aside, and stood still.

<sup>b</sup> Peace, or, peace be to thee. Gen. 43. 23; Judges 19. 20; 24. 18; 26. 8; Isa. 19. 4; Obad. 14.—<sup>c</sup>Is there  
—<sup>d</sup>Chap. 19. 4; Prov.

31 And, behold, Cu'shi came; and Cu'shi said, <sup>e</sup>Tidings, my lord the king: for the LORD <sup>f</sup>hath avenged thee this day of all them that rise up against thee.

32 And the king said unto Cu'shi, <sup>g</sup>Is the young man Ab'sa-lom safe? And Cu'shi answered, The enemies of my lord the king, and all that rise up against thee to do *thee* hurt, be as *that* young man *is*.

33 And the king was much moved, and went up to the chamber over the gate, and wept; and as he went, thus he said, <sup>h</sup>O my son Ab'sa-lom, my son, my son, Ab'sa-lom! would God I had died for thee, O Ab'sa-lom, my son, my son!

1 Sam. 25. 6; 1 Chron. 19. 18.—<sup>e</sup>Shut up. 1 Sam. 17. 46; peace?—<sup>f</sup>Tidings is brought.—<sup>g</sup>Psa. 27. 2; 55. 18.  
10. 1; 17. 21, 25; 19. 13.

and this fact made Ahimaaz to be loved by him.—*M. S. Terry.*

28. Ahimaaz called—This marks the eager haste with which, before he had quite reached the king, he shouted out the pithy, decisive word of good tidings, *Shalom!* peace, or, as the Authorized Version expresses it, All is well.—*Bishop Hervey.* Blessed be the Lord—It is well when in the heat of victory the messenger forgets not from whom the victory proceeds. Hath delivered—Literally, *shut up*. See 1 Sam. 17. 46; 24. 18; 26. 8; 30. 15, etc. The figure seems to be that of *confining* a person within the power of his enemy, in opposition to *giving him his liberty* “in a large room,” to work what mischief he pleases.—*Bishop Hervey.*

29, 30. Is the young man Absalom safe?—Not only the question itself, but the very terms of it, breathe the tenderness of David's feelings. Absalom is “the youth,” as if his youth were a full excuse for his conduct. Had David asked himself this question earlier he might not have needed to ask it then of another. The young man Absalom had not been safe for years. He had not been safe when allowed to have his own way, and let his passions run riot in the pleasures of a court; he had not been safe when his royal father failed to give him a father's care; he had not been safe when placed in the way of temptation, with no shielding influences. It was too late then to ask, “Is the young man Absalom safe?” When Joab sent the king's servant, etc.—Namely, the Cushite. A most unlikely statement for Ahimaaz to have made, and a most awkward grammatical sentence. The Vulgate gives the right sense, *When Joab the king's servant sent me thy servant.*—

*Bishop Hervey.* I saw a great tumult—He knew the king's son was dead, for Joab had told him, (verse 20;) but knowing the tenderness of David for Absalom, he would not be the herald of sad news to him. Josephus states that Ahimaaz obtained leave of Joab to run to David by assuring him that he would relate only the victory of his army, and not the death of Absalom.—*M. S. Terry.* Stand here—In the company of those surrounding the king, in due time to receive the reward of his services.

31, 32. Cushite came—It cannot be decided with certainty whether *Cushite* is the proper name of an Israelite, or whether it signifies the “Cushite,” that is, a descendant of Cush. The form of the name rather favors the latter view, in which case it would suggest the idea of a Moorish slave in the service of Joab.—*Keil and Delitzsch.* The enemies of my lord—The Ethiopian slave then comes, tells the same news, hears the same question; and, with no touch of reverence for the father's sorrow, nakedly blurts out, as if he were the bearer of good news, that which filled up the measure of David's woe.—*E. H. Prumptre.*

33. The chamber over the gate—An apartment in the upper part of the tower of one of the gates. And wept—We are irresistibly reminded of Him who, when he beheld the rebellious city of Jerusalem, and thought of the destruction it was bringing upon itself, “wept over it.” Luke 19. 41.—*Bishop Hervey.* Thus he said—He rushed into the watchman's chamber over the gate-way, and eight times over repeated the wail of grief for Absalom his son. It was the belief of the more merciful of the Jewish doctors that at each cry one of the seven gates



of hell rolled back, and that with the eighth the lost spirit of Absalom was received into the place of Paradise.—*Dean Stanley*. O my son Absalom—Absalom's sin and shame had two sides: there was in it the curse that David's sin brought on David's house, (2 Sam. 12, 10,) the misdeed of the father that is visited on the children, (Exod. 20, 5;) and not less Absalom's own wickedness and recklessness, which made him the bearer of the family curse. David looks at Absalom's deed not on the *latter* side, but on the *former*, (for his own guilt seems to him so great that he looks little at Absalom's;) hence his deep, boundless compassion for his misguided son.—*Kurtz*. David had not mourned after the death of his infant child, but had said, "Can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me." Chap. 12, 23. Why, then, this mourning for Absalom? Why so intense a sorrow for it? (See chap. 19, 4.) It was because David believed in the resurrection and in the judgment to come, and in a future state of rewards and punishments. It was because (as *Theodore* suggests) his son Absalom had been cut off in an act of sin, the wages of which are the second death; and because by Absalom's death the door of repentance and pardon was shut upon him.—*Wordsworth*. **Would God I had died for thee—David now pro-**

have seen that there was nothing in his own conduct to encourage his son in wickedness, or to provoke him to wrath; and then, though Absalom had made shipwreck, he might have had the consolation that he had done his utmost to prevent such a catastrophe.—*I. Taylor*. There still stands in the Kidron Valley a monument bearing Absalom's name. It is an isolated block hewn out of the rocky ledge, twenty-four feet square and forty in height. Most travelers have decided, with Robinson, that its style of architecture shows the work of a later age than that of Absalom; but some are inclined to identify it with the ancient pillar.—*M. S. Terry*.

The issue of the history, even as regards David, shows how *sin brings suffering*. Though his enemies are scattered and his throne restored, yet that deeply touching passage appointed for the reading lesson, where with keenest anxiety he waits for news of the battle, and with overwhelming grief he laments his lost son, shows him still suffering the yet unfinished consequences of his great fall. How the bad example he had set his children must have come home to him then! We sin, and our sin may be pardoned, but by sinning we have, perhaps, set in motion a chain of cause and effect which may work mischief years after. "Vouchsafe, O Lord, to keep us each day without sin."—*E. Stock*.

#### Authorities to be Consulted.

[For list of "Authorities to be Consulted" see the close of Lesson VI, as the two lessons belong to the same period in David's life.] Foster's Cyclopaedia of Illustrations, [numbers marked with a star refer to poetical quotations,] vers. 24-32: \*3084, \*3085; 28, 31: 4211; 33: \*8, 7487, 10657.

#### Practical Thoughts.

##### THE LESSONS OF ABSALOM'S DEATH.

1. Absalom's end shows, as in a picture, the final ruin which is sure to befall all whose plans are for self and self alone.

2. Absalom's end shows that a father's anxiety over his son will not save him when he has neglected a father's duty in the past.

3. Absalom's end shows that our acts have an influence affecting others beyond ourselves. David's sorrow was so deep because he saw in Absalom's death the result of his own sin.

4. Absalom's end shows that repentance and sorrow will not reverse the consequences of past sin.

5. Absalom's end shows that parental love may make one blind even to kingly obligations.



Absalom's Pillar.

fesses, and I believe with truth, to desire that he had died for Absalom; but that was a vain wish. He ought to have lived more for Absalom. He ought, by his own character, to have taught him to love holiness, or, at all events, he ought to

6. Absalom's end shows that no gifts or graces or endowments will supply the lack of character. Absalom's beauty and popularity could not save his name from everlasting disgrace.

### Sermon Outline.

BY REV. C. R. BARNES, M.A.

Troubles increased in the household of David after his unholy alliance with Bathsheba. His daughter, Tamar, was cruelly wronged by Amnon, her half-brother, who was slain at the instigation of Absalom. After the murder, Absalom fled to the court of his grandfather at Geshur, where he remained for three years. Meanwhile David's grief for Amnon abated, and his longing for Absalom induced him to recall his wayward son to Jerusalem. Two years passed without his being permitted to see his father's face, when through the influence of Joab a reconciliation was effected. This, however, did not satisfy the ambition of Absalom, who regarded himself as the rightful heir to the throne, and feared the influence of Bathsheba in favor of her son Solomon. He, therefore, resolved upon revolt, and sent spies through all the tribes instructing them at a given signal to proclaim him king. On pretense of paying a religious vow at Hebron, he went thither with two hundred men, and set up his standard. Hearing of the insurrection, David retired to Mahanaim beyond Jordan, whither he was followed by Absalom. A decisive battle was waged on the borders of the forest of Ephraim, in which 20,000 of Absalom's troops were slain, and he himself met his tragic death at the hands of Joab. The two conspicuous figures in this narrative will repay a careful and prayerful study.

#### I. David, the doting father.

David is a very forcible example, 1. *Of the weaknesses that often accompany and thwart the purposes of natural affection.* Of David's love we can have no doubt. The cry, "O my son Absalom! my son, my son, Absalom! would God I had died for thee," was a dirge that could only have been composed after the heart had broken. David did not maintain discipline in his family, and suffered sadly from the unchecked passion and ambition of his children. As a representative of the divine Father, training his offspring as his children, he should have taught them right, compelled obedience, and by administration of proper punishment sustained the majesty of broken law. But, notwithstanding the wrong done to Tamar, Amnon, the author of her shame, is allowed to go unrebuked. Nor is his death at the hand of Absalom avenged, save by allowing the murderer to remain in self-imposed banishment. David seemed at the mercy of those he loved, so that often he could not be merciful to them. And eventually this helpless affection led him to be unjust to Israel by allowing the selfishness and vanity of Absalom to develop into disloyalty and treason, endangering thereby

the integrity of the state, and opening the way for thousands to the gate of death.

Justice is not fatal to love. The rod is sometimes as much an evidence of affection as is the kiss. To hold a child by the firm grip of authority may be as profitable as to fold him to the breast. Obedience is the condition of soul that secures instruction, and that love is inexcusable that worships what it should commend.

David's disappointment and sorrow should warn us against the injustice of the sentiment that all we owe our children is love.

2. *David's increasing love.* Although we cannot defend his lack of parental discipline, and must deplore the resultant disorder and crime that brought such sorrow to his heart, yet we cannot but admire the strength of his affection. In the very struggle of treason, while his rebellious son wars against his life, he charges his generals, "Deal gently for my sake with the young man, even with Absalom." How every indignity seems forgotten, disloyalty is overlooked, and David sees, not the traitor, but his son Absalom. With what intensity does he watch for tidings from the field! And how was his love revealed by the question put to Cushai, "Is the young man Absalom safe?" When the sad tidings are spoken, how his wounded heart cries out, "O my son Absalom."

And if the poor human heart can be so tender and constant in love, even to the erring and rebellious child, is it not easy to believe in the loving pity, long-suffering, and forgiveness of the heavenly Father? We hear from the divine lips the refrain, "O Jerusalem, how often would," etc., and "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

#### II. Absalom, the rebellious son.

Absalom, the victim of vanity, needed the restraint of the strong hand of discipline. Proud of the elegance of his person, hungry for the adulation of flatterers, he strengthens his selfishness until it becomes master of his whole being. It has destroyed the strong, noble, sensitive qualities of his soul, and left him poor in manhood.

He has lost his love. Love can never be wife to vanity, for she "is not puffed up." All the wondrous affection of his father is of worth to him only as it tolerates his selfishness, pardons his wrongdoing, and furnishes him support. David, the mighty warrior, the able ruler, the sweet singer of Israel, awakens in Absalom no admiration, gratitude, or loyalty that, for a moment, control his purpose or action in the presence of his vanity. Ceasing to be affectionate he easily steps into disloyalty. Love and loyalty live only in each other's presence, while treason grows rank in the garden of selfishness. Absalom has gone so far that he can no longer be son nor subject; the words king and father fall like dead leaves upon his hardened heart, only to be swept away by the blasts of pride and ambition.

Hate now wields the sword of power, and with it

would fain feel the whitened head of father. And their selfish pride, refuse to bow before infinite love, and in meekness and longing pray, Our have been crowned by love, a type of those who, in Father.

B. C. 1017J

LESSON VIII.

[Aug. 24.]

THE PLAGUE STAYED.—2 Sam. 24. 15-25.

**GOLDEN TEXT:** So the Lord was entreated for the land, and the plague was stayed from Israel.—2 SAM. 24. 25.

TIME.—B. C. 1017.

PLACE.—The threshing-floor of Araunah the Jebusite, on Mount Moriah, the place where the temple was afterward built.

CONNECTING LINK.—The people numbered. 2 Sam. 24. 1-14.

INTRODUCTION.—For the purpose of ascertaining the number of the people, and their fitness for war, David ordered Joab, his commander-in-chief, to take a census of Israel and Judah. Joab dissuaded him from such a step; but, inasmuch as the king paid no attention to his dissuasions, he carried out the command, with the help of the military. Verses 1-9. David very speedily saw, however, that he had sinned; whereupon the prophet Gad went to him, by the command of Jehovah, to announce the coming punishment, and give him the choice of three different judgments which he placed before him. Verses 10-13. As David chose rather to fall into the hand of the Lord than into the hand of men, God sent a pestilence, which carried off seventy thousand men in one day, throughout the whole land, and had reached Jerusalem, when the Lord stopped the destroying angel in consequence of the penitential prayer of David, (verses 14-17,) and sent Gad to the king to direct him to build an altar to the Lord on the spot where the destroying angel had appeared to him. Verse 18. Accordingly David bought the threshing-floor of Araunah the Jebusite, and built an altar upon it, and sacrificed burnt-offerings and thank-offerings, after which the plague was stayed. Verses 19-25.—*Keil and Delitzsch.* David acted from motives unworthy of the delegated king of Israel; from pride and vain glory, from self-confidence and distrust of God, and, above all, from ambitious designs of conquest, in furtherance of which he was determined to force the people into military service; and to ascertain whether he could muster an army sufficient for the magnitude of the enterprises he contemplated. It was a breach of the constitution, an infringement of the liberties of the people, and opposed to that Divine policy which required that Israel should continue a separate people.—*R. Jamieson.*

15 So <sup>1</sup>the Lord sent a pestilence upon Is'ra-el, from the morning even to the time appointed: and there died of the people from Dan

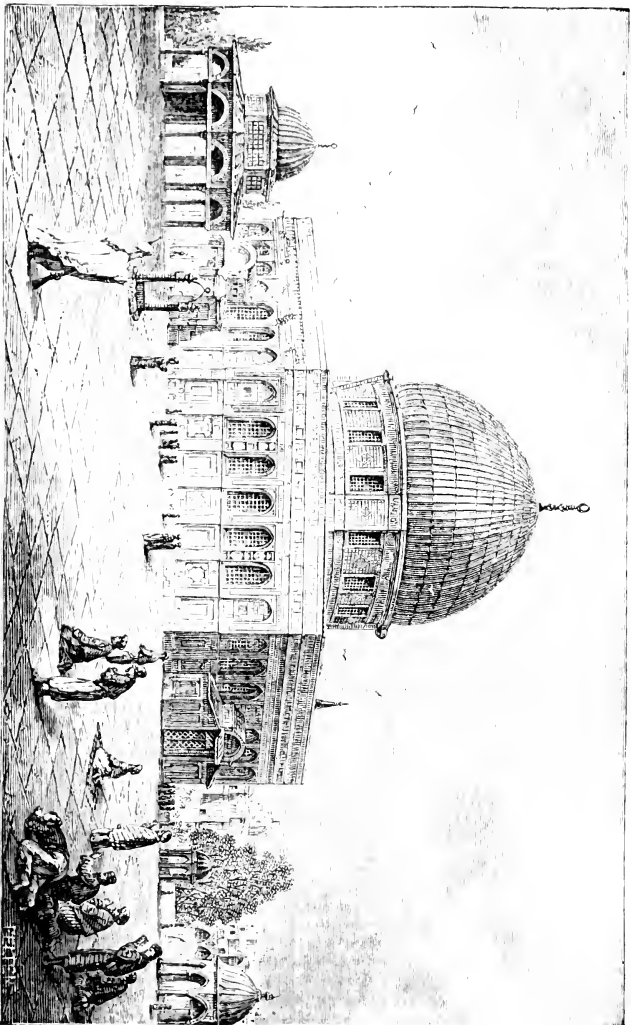
4 1 Chron.

21. 14; 27. 24.

**15. The Lord sent a pestilence**—The judgment descended in the form of a tremendous pestilence—"a death," as it is expressively termed in the original—like "the Black Death" of the Middle Ages. Appearing in the heat of the summer months, aggravated by the very greatness of the population which had occasioned the census, spreading with the rapidity of an Oriental disorder in crowded habitations, it flew from end to end of the country, and at last approached Jerusalem. The new capital, the very heart of the nation, the peculiar glory of David's reign, seemed to be doomed to destruction.—*Dean Stanley.* **Even to the time appointed**—The meaning of these words, which are not found in Chronicles, is very doubtful. (1) The English Version follows the Vulgate, *Usque ad tempus constitutum.*

This would naturally mean until the end of the third day; but the duration of the plague seems to have been mercifully shortened. Verse 16. Perhaps a *time appointed*—there is no definite article—might mean a time determined in the counsel of God, before the expiration of the period originally named. (2) Most commentators render *until the time of assembly*, that is, the hour for offering the evening sacrifice, about three o'clock in the afternoon. Comp. 1 Kings 18. 29, 36; Dan. 9. 21; Acts 3. 1. This is supported by the explanation given in the Targum, and by Jerome.—*Cambridge Bible.* It is remarkable that this was the hour of Christ's death, (Matt. 27. 45-50; Mark 15. 38-37; Luke 23. 44-46,) by which the wrath of God against all mankind for sin was appeased; and God said to the destroying angel, holding





The Mosque of Omar or Dome of the Rock.

17 And Da'vid spake unto the LORD, when he saw the angel that smote the people, and said, Lo. <sup>6</sup>I have sinned, and I have done wickedly: but these sheep, what have they done? Let thine hand, I pray thee, be against me, and against my father's house.

<sup>6</sup> 1 Chron. 21. 17.—<sup>6</sup> 1 Chron.

This building is generally known to Europeans as "The Mosque of Omar," and is supposed by many to stand upon the place where Abraham offered Isaac, and where Solomon established the altar of the Temple.

The Lord our God is a consuming fire to the sinner, and punishes, when it must be, with frightful earnestness, so that it goes through marrow and bone; but in the midst of the most awful judgments the Lord thinks of mercy. He pities us, that is the only reason why he thinks of mercy.—*Schlier*.

God stayed the angel, who had the sword drawn in his hand, from destroying Jerusalem, in the same place where he had stayed Abraham, who had the knife in his hand, from sacrificing his son Isaac.—*Wordsworth*.

17. David spake unto the Lord—As we speak to God in earnest prayer. When he saw the angel—His vision was so spiritualized, and his inner sense so enlarged, that he was permitted to behold "the angel of the Lord stand between the earth and heaven, having a drawn sword in his hand stretched out over Jerusalem." The elders who were with him in penitential garb seem to have seen the angel also. Such angelic personages are often around us in their ministrations of judgment or of love, but rarely have they been allowed to manifest themselves to human vision.—*M. S. Terry*. I have sinned—I, only I, am the guilty cause of all this woe! It is ever a characteristic of the subdued and heart-broken penitent to take all possible blame upon himself. He who, in professedly deep contrition, throws any blame on others, or seeks to involve others in his guilt, is not so much a penitent as a disappointed schemer.—*M. S. Terry*. Sinned . . . done wickedly—Sin is doubly described as *missing an aim*, coming short of the mark of duty, and as *crooked* or perverse action, following the leadings of self-will instead of the straightforward path of right.—*Cambridge Bible*. These sheep, what have they done—Done! Why they had done much amiss; it was their sin that provoked God to leave David himself to do as he did, yet, as became a penitent, he is severe upon his own faults, while he exten-

18 And Gad came that day to Da'vid, and said unto him, <sup>6</sup>Go up, rear an altar unto the LORD in the threshing-floor of <sup>a</sup>A-rau'nah the Jeb'u-site.

19 And Da'vid, according to the saying of Gad, went up, as the LORD commanded.

21. 18. —<sup>a</sup> Araiah.

uates theirs. Most people, when God's judgments are abroad, charge others with being the cause of them, and care not who falls by them, so they can escape; but David's penitent and public spirit was otherwise affected.—*M. Henry*. Let thine hand . . . be against me—David, offering his own life for his people, (ver. 17,) and sacrificing on the threshing-floor of Araiah, and appeasing God's wrath, and staying the plague on Moriah, was a type of Christ offering himself at Jerusalem as a propitiation for the sin of the world, and staying the plague of Death which threatened to destroy them.—*Wordsworth*.

He that had put himself upon the paws of the bear and lion, for the rescue of his sheep, will now cast himself upon the sword of the angel for the preservation of Israel.—*Bishop Hall*.

Not from the virtues of God's children, but from their tears for their faults, shines upon us the noblest silver light of their new life.—*F. W. Krummacher*.

18. And Gad—A prophet and particular friend of David, the history of whose reign he wrote, 1 Chron. 29. 29. He came to David when the latter was in the cave Adullam. 1 Sam. 22. 5. He then began his career of counselor, under divine direction, which eventually won him the title of "the king's seer."—*Schaff*. Came that day—The narrative here goes back. Gad's message to David was doubtless the cause of his going up to the threshing-floor, accompanied by the elders in sackcloth, (1 Chron. 21. 16,) where, on his arrival, he saw the angel, as stated above in verse 17.—*Bishop Hervey*. An altar unto the Lord—Besides his prayer, David was now to make public affirmation of his guilt, and of his willingness henceforth with the people to devote himself as an offering to the Lord, by building an altar.—*Erdmann*.

Peace is made between God and sinners by sacrifice, and not otherwise, even by Christ, the great propitiation, of whom all the legal sacrifices were types. It is for his sake that the destroying angel is bid to stay his hand.—*M. Henry*.

19. David . . . went up as the Lord commanded—See his humility, how far he was from taking state; though a king, he was now

20 And A-rau'nah looked, and saw the king and his servants coming on toward him: and A-rau'nah went out, and bowed himself before the king on his face upon the ground.

21 And A-rau'nah said, Wherefore is my lord the king come to his servant? 7 And Da'vid said, To buy the threshing-floor of thee, to build an altar unto the LORD, that the plague may be stayed from the people.

22 And A-rau'nah said unto Da'vid,

7 Gen. 23, 8.—8 Num. 16, 48.—9 1 Kings 19, 21.

a penitent, and, therefore, in token of his self-abasement, he neither sent for Araunah to come to him, nor sent another to deal with him, but went himself.—*M. Henry.*

20. Araunah looked, and saw the king—According to Chronicles, he, too, had seen the angel, and, in their terror, himself and his four sons had hid themselves.—*M. S. Terry.* Went out—From the threshing-floor, where he was at work threshing wheat.—*Cambridge Bible.* Bowed himself before the king—Beside the rocky threshing-floor the two princes met—the fallen king of the ancient fortress, the new king of the restored capital—each moved alike by the misfortunes of a city which, in different senses, belonged to each.—*Dean Stanley.*

21. Araunah . . . David—It was the meeting of two ages. Araunah, as he yields that spot, is the last of the Canaanites, the last of that stern old race that we discern in any individual form and character. David, as he raises that altar, is the close harbinger of the reign of Solomon, the founder of a new institution which another was to complete.—*Dean Stanley.*



Treading out the grain.

22. Oxen for burnt sacrifice—The burnt-offering might be an ox or bullock, a goat or ram, or a pair of pigeons. The more valuable was preferred, as indicative of a full consecration. The burnt-offering was entirely consumed upon the altar. Threshing instruments—Sledges or frames armed on the underside with

Let my lord the king take and offer up what seemeth good unto him: 2 behold, here be oxen for burnt sacrifice, and threshing instruments and other instruments of the oxen for wood.

23 All these things did A-rau'nah, as a king, give unto the king. And A-rau'nah said unto the king, The LORD thy God accept 10 thee.

24 And the king said unto A-rau'nah, Nay; but I will surely buy it of thee at a price: neither will I offer burnt offer-

10 Psal. 20, 3; 119, 108; Ezek. 20, 40; 1 Pet. 2, 5.

rollers or sharp pikes, used for the purpose of bruising the ears of corn, and extracting the grain, and, at the same time, breaking up the straw into small pieces for use as fodder.—*Cambridge Bible.* Instruments of the oxen—The yoke, and, perhaps, other parts of the harness of oxen. These instruments could never be put to nobler use.—*M. S. Terry.*

23. Araunah as a king—Indicating, as the sense is, that this man had been anciently a heathen king or chief, but was now a proselyte who still retained great property and influence in Jerusalem, and whose piety was evinced by the liberality of his offers. The words, "as a king," are taken by some to signify simply "he gave with royal munificence."—*R. Jamieson.*

The willingness of Araunah the Jebusite to give gifts to David, foreshadowed the readiness of the Gentiles to bring tribute and to do homage to Christ. Psal. 72, 10, 11; 110, 3.—*Wordsworth.*

24. The king said unto Araunah—Two frank hearts are well met: David would buy, Araunah would give; the Jebusite would not sell, David will not take. Since it was for God,

and to David, Araunah is loath to bargain; since it was for God, David wisheth to pay dear.—*Bishop Hall.* I will surely buy it of thee—For otherwise it would have been Araunah's offering, and not David's. Bought the threshing-floor and the oxen for fifty shekels of silver—About twenty-five dollars, at a time when the precious metals were worth ten times as much as now. In 1 Chron.

21, 25, we read that David gave to Ornan six hundred shekels of gold by weight for the place. David did two things; he purchased for fifty shekels of silver the oxen and the threshing-floor for his own immediate use on that particular occasion, when he built an altar, and offered sacrifice to God, for this special mercy to himself and

ings unto the LORD my God of that which doth cost me nothing. So <sup>11</sup>Da'vid bought the threshing-floor and the oxen for fifty shekels of silver.

25 And Da'vid built <sup>b</sup>there an altar

<sup>11</sup> 1 Chron. 21. 24.—<sup>b</sup> Which became the site of the Temple.

his. But he did more than this; he also purchased *the place*, probably the area of the house and homestead of Araunah, as a site for the *temple* to be built by Solomon, and for all its glorious apparatus of services in future generations. The author of the Chronicles supposes his readers to be acquainted with the Books of Samuel, and adds fresh materials to them.—*Wordsworth*.

Those know not what religion is, all whose care it is to make it cheap and easy to themselves, and who are best pleased with that which costs them least pains or money. What have we our substance for, but to honor God with it, and how can it be better bestowed?—*M. Henry*.

The altar of David, and the temple of Solomon, erected on the threshing-floor and field of Araunah the Jebusite, the heathen lord of the soil, at Moriah, where Abraham's sacrifice was offered, were a figure of the Church universal, built of lively stones of all true Israelites of all nations, on the foundation of the faith of Abraham.—*Wordsworth*.

25. David built there an altar—This he seems to have done without the least delay. The destroying angel still hovered near, and the plague had scarcely yet abated.—*M. S. Terry*. Offered burnt-offerings—As a type and symbol of his entire consecration, body and soul, to Jehovah. Peace-offerings—Expressive of his realization of peace and friendship with God, and his thankful homage for the divine favour. Chronicles adds that he called on the Lord and was answered by fire from heaven upon his offerings. This spot became the site of the temple. 2 Chron. 3. 1.—*M. S. Terry*.

**The Sacred Rock**—It is irregular in its form, and measures about sixty feet in one direction, and fifty feet in the other. It projects about five feet above the marble pavement, and the pavement of the mosque is twelve feet above the general level of the inclosure, making this rise seventeen feet above the ground. . . . It appears to be the natural surface of Mount Moriah; in a few places there are marks of chiselling, but its south-east corner is an excavated chamber, to which there is a descent by a flight of stone steps. This chamber is irregular in form, and its superficial area is about six hundred feet, the average height seven feet. In the center of the rocky cave there is a circular slab of marble, which being struck makes a hollow

unto the LORD, and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings. So the LORD was <sup>12</sup>entreated for the land, and the plague was stayed from Is'ra-el.

1 Chron. 22. 1.—<sup>12</sup> 2 Sam. 21. 14; 2 Chron. 33. 13; Isa. 19. 22.

sound, thereby showing that there is a well or excavation beneath.—*Catherwood*.

The Mohammedans believe the rock to be suspended in mid-air, and, as proof of it, cite the ringing sound given forth when the bottom of the cave is struck. In the center of the floor is Bir-el-Arwah, the Well of Spirits. In this, they say, all departed souls are confined by Mohammed until the last judgment.—*H. B. Ridgaway*.

The theory of Professor Willis and others is, that the great altar of sacrifice in the Temple stood on this rock, that the cave was the cess-pool beneath the altar, and that the Well of Spirits was none other than the drain through which the blood and water flowed from the altar into the sewers underneath the temple area. It seems, as Dean Stanley hints, a little improbable that so unshapely a rock should have been left in the midst of the temple, yet it is certain that Araunah and his four sons hid themselves when they saw the angel, and also came out of the threshing-floor at David's arrival, showing that there was a place of concealment. 1 Chron. 21. 20, 21. In the threshing-floor of Gideon's father there was such a place, where he hid the grain from the Midianites, and just such a cave I found afterward adjoining the great rock on which the altar of the Samaritan Temple is supposed to have stood.—*H. B. Ridgaway*.

#### Authorities to be Consulted.

Stanley's Jewish Church, lecture 24. Bishop Hall's Contemplations. Bible Educator. Geikie's Hours with the Bible, vol. iii, chap. 12. Kitto's Daily Bible Illustrations, 39th week. Stanley's Sinai and Palestine. Freeman's Manners and Customs, 295, 508. Foster's Cyclopaedia of Illustrations, [numbers marked by a star refer to the poetical quotations,] vers. 10-17: \*2303, \*2311; 15: 6568, 9888; 16: 130; 17: 4550; 24: 6131, 8265; 25: 6957, 10800.

#### Practical Thoughts

##### [THE LESSONS FROM THE PLAGUE.]

1. Though Israel be the Lord's people, yet it shall suffer, and suffer more than other peoples for its sins. Ver. 15.
2. The sins of rulers are visited upon the people, especially when the people have a part in the sin. Ver. 15.
3. God's power in destruction is made manifest in order to show God's power and grace in salvation. Ver. 16.



4. God uses the instrumentality of angels in works of punishment as well as of grace. Ver. 16.

5. The plans of God may change, though his purposes are unalterable. Ver. 16.

6. The true penitent confesses his sin, and seeks not to cast its responsibility upon others. Ver. 17.

7. The altar is the meeting-place where God's judgment ends and his mercy begins. Ver. 18.

8. The offering to the Lord must be that which the offerer presents as his own gift, not given to him by another. Ver. 24.

**Sermon Outline.**

BY REV. K. P. KITCHAM, D.D.

INTRODUCTION.—Rapidly, passionately, up and down and across the Holy Land, David's commander-in-chief is moving. But it is not with the alacrity of cheerful zeal; he is very angry. Little need such as David care for this however, but alas! there is deeper displeasure in the case. With him, and the one calamity of human life is here with him—God is not well pleased.

In pride, presumption, naughtiness of heart, David had sinned, and penalties are at hand.

**THEME: The divine penalties for sin.**

**A. THEIR CHARACTER. B. THEIR REMISSION.**

**A. Their character.**

1. *Unfallingly sure.* Men's laws defective, judgments inoperative, God's forever unailing. No power can reverse them, no cunning evade them, no flight elude them, no station transcend them, no prayers, no promises postpone them. When a man requests, "deliver me from the operation, the penalties of divine law," physical or moral, he is never, never heard! The sole exception in all the universe of being and experience being found in the interventions of Jesus Christ. David pleaded with the most penitential importunity against the judgments, but all in vain. Ver. 10.

2. *Far-reaching.* Penalties reach to every department of one's personal being, to all his life re-

lationships, and on to eternity. Children suffer from parental sins; people from sins of rulers.

3. Yet (ver. 1) *Penalties are just.* The sins of the individual enter with the sins of his representative in the penalties.

1. *Intolerably severe.* To a sensitive soul, looking at revelation or experience, our nature, relations, or prospects, "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." We cannot measure the recoil of divine holiness and law upon sin for penalties. And we need not try, but are to ask of the remedy. So,

**B. How penalties are remitted.**

What marks the path from sin to the favor of God? Atonement, with a penitent and consecrated spirit. Christ's great sacrifice. Our self-sacrifice.

1. *Atonement.* Ver. 25. "Burnt-offerings." So Christ's substitution, Christ's satisfaction. Hence pardon.

2. *Merit, righteousness.* Ver. 25. "Peace-offerings." Christ's righteousness. So pardon and merit, or justification complete.

3. *Is conditional,* penitence, faith, prayer. Ver. 17.

4. *Our own consecration gifts.* A service that "costs." Ver. 24.

5. *David heard, as prayed for others.* Ver. 17. Here heaven's own disposition and solicitude. Job 42, 10.

**Close.**—1. It is every thing in life to "please God!" O the elevation, the all-commanding height of him of whom it can be said at last, "He had this testimony, that he pleased God."

2. We begin in sin, and are always liable to penalties. *At once* escape.

3. Recognize Jesus Christ as the "author and finisher of our faith."

4. Watch, fight, pray to the end. David, now an old man, yet sinned and suffered, and others with him.

5. Save others. Cheering counterpart to the momentous reality, that you can involve others in sin and penalty, you can lead others up from sin and death to God and heaven.

Welcome, and then re-echo, the glad benediction and evangel from the skies, "There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus."

INTRODUCTION.—This psalm was undoubtedly written by David, but its date is unknown. The author in this psalm, as in many other places, considers the work of nature and the words of revelation as both of them laws of the same hand, and standing firmly by the same authority, both highly perfect in their kind, and containing great matter of instruction; one for the whole world, the other for his favored

people, and himself particularly.—*Mudge*. It may have been written, perhaps, in the first flush of an Eastern sunrise, when the sun was seen going forth as a bridegroom out of his chamber and rejoicing as a mighty man to run his course. The song breathes all the life and freshness, all the gladness and glory of the morning. The devout singer looks out, first, on the works of God's fingers, and sees all creation bearing its constant, though silent, testimony to its Maker; and then he turns himself with a feeling of deep satisfaction to that yet clearer and better witness concerning him to be found in the inspired Scriptures. Thus he begins the day; thus he prepares himself for the duties that await him, for the temptations that may assail, and the sorrows that may gather as a cloud about him. He has made trial of the preciousness of that word. He knows its deep, hallowing, soul-sustaining power. He knows that it is full of life and healing. But he knows also that it is a word that searches and tries the heart, that reveals the holiness of God, and the sinfulness of man; and, therefore, he bows himself in prayer, saying, "As for errors, who can understand them? Cleanse thou me from secret faults."—*Perowne*.

1 The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth his handywork.

2 Day unto day uttereth speech,

1 Isa. 40 22; Rom. 1. 19.—a Without their voice

1. **The heavens**—The heavens, that is, the superterrestrial spheres which, so far as human vision is concerned, are lost in infinite space.—*Delitzsch*. **Declare the glory of God**—Of the two clauses of this verse, the first states the fact that the heavens publish God's glory; the second explains *how* this is done, namely, by testifying that he has made them.—*Perowne*. **God**—Hebrew, "El;" a name which denotes the majesty and power of God. It is the only name which occurs in the first part of this psalm, and here once only, in studied antithesis to the name Jehovah, which is used exclusively, seven times in the second part. David celebrates the *glory* of El, the God of nature, the *law* of Jehovah, the God of the covenant. Exod. 6. 3.—*Canon Cook*. **The firmament**—In the Old Testament the noun has the sense of *expanse*, and also of *firmness*, *steadfastness*.—*F. G. Hibbard*. **Showeth his handywork**—In the expanse above us God flies, as it were, his starry flag to show that the king is at home, and hangs out his escutcheon that atheists may see how he despises their denunciations of him.—*Spurgeon*.

During the French Revolution, Jean Bon St. Andre, the Vendean revolutionist, said to a peasant; "I will have all your steeples pulled down that you may no longer have any object by which you may be reminded of your old superstitions." "But," replied the peasant, "you cannot help leaving us the stars."—*John Bates*.

2. **Day unto day**—Each dawning day continues the speech of that which has declined, and each approaching night takes up the tale of that which has passed away.—*Delitzsch*. **Uttereth speech**—Literally, "poureth forth speech." Each day overflows with utterances

and night unto night showeth knowledge.

3 There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard.

heard, or, without these their voice is heard.

full of meaning, which it transmits to its successor.—*Canon Cook*. **Night unto night**—Day bids us labor, night reminds us to prepare for our last home; day bids us work for God, and night invites us to rest in him; day bids us look for an endless day, and night warns us to escape from everlasting night.—*Spurgeon*. **Showeth knowledge**—Calvin gives an excellent summary of the respectable opinions concerning this verse. (1) No day passes in which God does not show some signal evidence of his power. (2) Every succeeding day contributes something new in proof of the existence and perfections of God. (3) The days and nights talk together, and reason concerning the glory of the Creator.—*Pomeroy*.

We may illustrate the differing measures in which natural objects convey knowledge to men of differing mental and spiritual capacity by the story of our great English artist. He is said to have been engaged upon one of his immortal works, and a lady of rank remarked, "But, Mr. Turner, I do not see in nature all that you describe there." "Ah, madame," answered the painter, "do you not wish you could?"—*Spurgeon*.

3. **There is no speech**—There are two views of the interpretation of this verse. According to some commentators (Cook, Vaihinger, and others) the translation of the Authorized Version is correct. Canon Cook says: "This translation gives a clear sense, well adapted to the context; it is supported by the ancient versions and critics, (Vaihinger,) and is grammatically defensible." [The other view is expressed in the following note, and has the sanction of most modern expositors.] There is no speech and there is no words; their voice is inaudible, that is, they are silent,

4 <sup>1</sup> Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. In them hath he set a tabernacle for the sun;

5 Which is <sup>2</sup> as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoicing as a strong man to run a race.

<sup>1</sup> Or, Their rule, or, direction. Rom. 10. 18.—<sup>2</sup> Eccles. 11. 7.

speechless witnesses, uttering no sound, but yet speaking aloud (Hengstenberg) only inwardly audible, but yet intelligible every-where.—*Delitzsch*. Their voice is not heard—The import of the verse is, that however diverse human languages and tongues may be, and however unintelligible the speech of one people may be to another, yet the mute, inarticulate, but clear, language of the heavens above us is that there is a glorious Creator, a strong God, as *El* signifies.—*Plumer*.

4. Their line—In all other passages *line* (*kar*) means either a measuring line, or a rule, (*sc.* of conduct,) a precept, or decree; nor would the last sense be unsuitable; the decree of the heavens goes forth, proclaiming the glory of God, and the duty of worshipping him.—*Canon Cook*. Through all the earth—The apostle designed to say that God, from ancient times, had manifested his glory to the Gentiles, and that this was a prelude to the more ample instruction which was one day to be published to them.—*Calvin*. In them—In the midst of them; and the figure of his tent being pitched there is an allusion to the Oriental custom of putting the tent of the emir in the center of the encampment.—*F. G. Hibbard*. A tabernacle—A tent. For the sun—In the midst of the heavens the sun encamps, and marches like a mighty monarch on his glorious way. He has no fixed abode, but as a traveler pitches and removes his tent, a tent which will soon be taken down and rolled together as a scroll. As the royal pavilion stood in the center of the host, so the sun in his place appears like a king in the midst of attendant stars.—*Spurgeon*.

"Where is your God? show him to me," said a proud heathen monarch to a devout Jew. "I cannot show you my God, but come with me and I will show you one of his messengers." Taking him to the open air he pointed to the unclouded sun, and said, "Look at that." "I cannot, it pains my eyes," said the monarch. "Then," said the Jew, "how couldst thou look on the face of Him, at whose rebuke thou pillars of heaven tremble?"—*Plumer*.

5. As a bridegroom—The morning light has in it a freshness and cheerfulness, as it were

6 His going forth <sup>3</sup> is from the end of the heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it: and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof.

7 The law of the Lord is perfect, <sup>4</sup> converting the soul: the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple:

<sup>3</sup> Eccles. 1. 5.—<sup>4</sup> Or, doctrine. 2 Tim. 3. 16, 17.—<sup>5</sup> Or, restoring.

renewed youth. Therefore, the morning sun is compared to a bridegroom, the desire of whose heart is satisfied, who stands, as it were, at the beginning of new life, and in whose youthful countenance the joy of the wedding-day still shines.—*Delitzsch*. Rejoiceth as a strong man—The meaning is not, he rejoices in running, but, he rejoices running = he runs joyfully.—*Hitzig*.

6. His going forth—David proposes to us three things to be considered in the sun: the splendor and excellency of his form, (ver. 5;) the swiftness with which he runs his course, (ver. 6;) and the astonishing power of his heat, (ver. 6.)—*Calvin*. Nothing hid—The heat of the sun, which is the condition of physical life, reaches as far as the teaching of the heavens; they instruct all, he quickens all. Hence the fitness of the symbol, and of the application to the Lord Christ and his apostles. Rom. 10. 18.—*Canon Cook*.

Both the light and heat of the sun are necessary to animal and vegetable life. The number, vigor, and beauty of plants are much affected by the quantity of light and heat. Professor Willdenow says: "In Spitzbergen there are 30 plants; in Lapland, 534; in Iceland, 553; in Sweden, 1,299; in the Marquisate of Brandenburg, 2,000; in Piedmont, 2,800; on the coast of Coromandel, nearly 4,000; as many in the island of Jamaica; in Madagascar, above 5,000.—*Plumer*."

7. The law—Despite the seeming abruptness, there is a point of connection between the two portions of the psalm. What the sun is in the natural world that the law is in the spiritual: the one quickens and cherishes all animal life—nothing being hid from his heat; the other quickens and cherishes the life of the soul.—*Perowne*. The law of the Lord—By which he means, not merely the law of Moses, but the doctrine of God, the whole run and rule of sacred writ.—*Spurgeon*. The Lord—This transition is marked here by the change of the divine name from God (*El*) to Lord, (Jehovah.)—*Wordsworth*. Is perfect—Rules of life invented by serious men among the heathen and in Christian lands may have produced a civil discipline, and so may have profited for this life. But they

8 The statutes<sup>4</sup> of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes:

9 The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring for ever: the judgments of

<sup>4</sup> Neh. 9. 13. — *Truth.*

were much mixed with error. Nor had they saving power. They were not *perfect*, as is the law of God, "in doctrine, in precept, in promise, in threatening."—*Plumer*. **Converting the soul**—Literally, bringing it back, *sc.*, from ignorance and sin; the word involves the idea of deliverance and refreshment. The converting efficacy depends, of course, upon its application to the heart by the Spirit—a point which David may have discerned but imperfectly, and was not commissioned to declare.—*Canon Cook*.

**The testimony**—As testifying, bearing witness of God's character, both in his good-will toward those who obey him and in his displeasure against transgressions, especially in the latter sense.—*Perowne*. **Sure**—Faithful, true, steadfast. Its derivative, *amen*, (a word of confirmation,) brings out the idea.—*F. G. Hibbard*. **Making wise**

—The testimony of God in his word relates, in chief part, to things which we never could have known had he not spoken. It is suited to make wise, not only for the true and excellent matter it contains, but because it is clear, teaches the best lessons in the simplest manner, is precisely adapted to man's weakness and wickedness, being the testimony of Him who knows all hearts.—*Plumer*. **The simple**—The man who is in the condition of one in his minority, uneducated and open to every impression, especially to slander and temptation, who, however, has not yet lost the disposition of a child.—*C. B. Moll*.

What a blessing that in a world of uncertainties we have something sure to rest upon! We hasten from the quicksands of human speculations to the *terra firma* of divine revelation.—*Spurgeon*.

8. The statutes—The commands or ordinances contained in God's law. **Are right**—They require only what a rightly constituted nature would recognize as just requirements. **Rejoicing the heart**—This is their effect on the obedient. The highest joy of men and angels is conscious conformity to the law of God.—*F. G. Hibbard*. **Enlightening the eyes**—It removes a thousand misconceptions, prejudices, and follies, which, like fog and darkness, obscure our perceptions. It shows us the real nature of the things of which it treats, the greatest things of the world.—*Plumer*.

the LORD are true and righteous altogether.

10 More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold; sweeter also than honey, and <sup>f</sup>the honey-comb.

<sup>f</sup>The dropping of honey-combs.

Look at the sun and it puts out your eyes, look at the more than sunlight of revelation and it enlightens them; the purity of snow causes snow-blindness to the Alpine traveler, but the purity of God's truth has the contrary effect, and cures the natural blindness of the soul.—*Spurgeon*.

9. The fear of the Lord—Godly fear, the fear of reverence inseparable from love, "which never faileth."—*Canon Cook*. **Is clean**—The sense here is, that there is nothing in it that tends to corrupt the morals or defile the soul. Every thing connected with it is of a pure and holy tendency, adapted to cleanse the soul and to make it holy.—*Barnes*. **Enduring forever**—When the governments of nations are shaken with revolution, and ancient constitutions are being repealed, it is comforting to know that the throne of God is unshaken, and his law unaltered.—*Spurgeon*. **The judgments of the Lord** are his laws, frequently called his judgments, because they are the declarations of his righteous will, and, as it were, his legal and judicial sentence, by which he expects that men should govern themselves, and by which he will judge them at the last day.—*Pool*. **Altogether**—Wholly and harmoniously. Whether viewed separately, or as a collective body, the divine laws are perfect in themselves and in their harmony.—*F. G. Hibbard*.

Mr. Godly-fear is never satisfied till every street, lane, and alley, yea, and every house and every corner of the town of Man-soul is clean rid of the Diabolonians who lurk therein.—*Spurgeon*.

10. More to be desired . . . than gold—*Gold*, as the rarest, and therefore the most costly good and most sought after, symbol of the dearest possession, and object of the most eager strife of men.—*C. B. Moll*. **Sweeter also than honey**—*Honey*, as the *sweetest* symbol of the most delightful enjoyment.—*C. B. Moll*. **And the honey-comb**—More properly as in the margin, *dropping of honey-combs*. The allusion is to honey that drops from the combs, and, therefore, the most pure honey. That which is pressed from the comb will have almost inevitably a mixture of bee-bread and of the combs themselves. That which flows from the comb will be pure.—*Barnes*.

11 Moreover by them is thy servant <sup>6</sup> warned: *and* in keeping of them *there is* great reward.

12 Who can understand *his* errors? cleanse thou me from secret *faults*.

13 Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous *sins*; let them not have

\* Prov. 6. 22, 23.—*Or*, much.

Old people are all for profit, the young for pleasure; here's gold for the one, yea, the finest gold in great quantity; here's honey for the others, yea, live honey dropping from the comb.—*J. Trapp*.

11. **By them is thy servant warned**—In this clause David simply tells what had been up to this time the practical influence of God's word on his life. In the next clause he tells of the success attending such a course.—*Plummer*. **Warned**—The essential idea here is to *throw light on the subject so* as to show it clearly; that is, make the duty plain and the consequences plain. Comp. Lev. 15. 31; Ezek. 3. 18; 33. 7.—*Barnes*. **Great reward**—The word here rendered *reward*, signifieth *the hol*, and, by a metaphor, *the cal* of a work, and the *reward* of it, which is not till the end.—*John Trapp*.

A certain Jew had formed a design to poison Luther, but was disappointed by a faithful friend, who sent Luther a portrait of the man, with a warning against him. By this Luther knew the murderer, and escaped his hands. Thus the word of God, O Christian, shows thee the face of those lusts which Satan employs to destroy thy comforts and poison thy soul.—*Bowes*.

12. **Who can understand his errors**—The strain here changes suddenly; the psalmist applies the law to himself. As for errors, sins of ignorance, or infirmity, who can discern them?—*Canon Cook*. **Errors**—The radical idea of the word is, to *wander, go astray, rove*; used often of unconscious sins, (sins of ignorance,) as Lev. 4. 2. These are difficult to detect. The Hebrew is very emphatic: *As to his wanderings, who can know them?*—*F. G. Hibbard*. **Cleanse thou me**—The primary and prominent idea suggested to the Hebrew mind by the word *cleanse* is that of *remission, holding guiltless, or clearing, setting free from punishment, acquitting*. Schmidt says: "It is a judicial term and means acquittal;" Calvin: "The word *cleanse* is to be referred, not to the blessing of regeneration, but to free forgiveness;" *Amesius*, *absolve me*; *Hengstenberg*, *acquit me*. He adds that the word rendered *cleanse* "always signifies to *declare* innocent, to ac-

dominion over me; then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from <sup>7</sup>the great transgression.

14 Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O LORD, <sup>8</sup>my strength, and my <sup>6</sup>redeemer.

<sup>8</sup> My rock — <sup>6</sup> Isa. 44. 6; 47. 4.

quit."—*Plummer*. **Secret faults**—Sins of ignorance. The law of Moses prescribed atonement for such, after they should come to the knowledge of the person. Lev. 4. 15-19; Num. 15. 25. They belonged to the lowest class of offenses; yet, if persisted in after knowledge, they became willful transgressions.—*F. G. Hibbard*. The sum of this petition is, Cleanse me from those sins which may be unknown to my neighbors, or which are unknown to myself.—*Plummer*.

Many books have a few lines of errata at the end, but our errata might well be as large as the volume if we could but have sense enough to see them. Augustine wrote in his older days a series of retractions; ours might make a library if we had enough grace to be convinced of our mistakes and to confess them.—*Sprygeon*.

13. **Presumptuous sins**—Literally, *proudness*: sins committed with knowledge and passion, such as hinted at Psalm 119. 21, the extreme opposite of the "secret faults" of verse 12.—*F. G. Hibbard*. Presumptuous sins are here personified as tyrants who strive to bring the servant of God into unbecoming subjection to them. That the Lord alone can keep from this servitude discovers the depth of human corruption.—*Hengstenberg*. **Not have dominion**—Dominion is prevailing power. The Canaanites lived in Judea even after the times of Joshua, and they greatly annoyed the Israelites; but they were not the lords of the land.—*Plummer*. **The great transgression**—Or, "and guiltless from great transgression." The word "great" is emphatic, guilt matured, fully developed. May not this earnest, touching prayer indicate an inward consciousness of liability to the special temptation of the king?—*Canon Cook*.

14. **Meditation of my heart**—Its *devices* and *secret counsels*. What higher standard of holiness does the New Testament set for us than is contained in these last two verses?—*F. G. Hibbard*. **Be acceptable**—The usual formula applied to God's acceptance of sacrifices offered to him. Lev. 1. 3, 4, etc. Prayer to God is the sacrifice of the heart and of the lips. Compare Hosea 14. 2, "So will we offer our lips as calves." 237

—*Perowne. My redeemer*—The expression occurs first Genesis 48. 16, "The angel which redeemed me from all evil." When applied to God it is always in the sense of a deliverer, who maintains the cause of his own people, and ransoms, or, more generally, saves them.—*Canon Cook.*

#### Authorities to be Consulted.

See Perowne, Horne, Hengstenberg, and Barnes on the Psalms; and especially Spurgeon's Treasury of David. Dick's Christian Philosopher. Sermons by Simeon, Spurgeon, and others. Foster's Cyclopaedia of Illustrations, [numbers marked with a star refer to poetical quotations.] ver. 1: \*572, \*576, 7613; 2: 1529, 4094; 3: \*1517; 4: 3275; 5: 1680; 6: 11855; 7: 5228, 6777; 8: 5226; 10: \*2721, 6806, 11616; 11: 872, 12192; 12: 8688; 13: 5340; 14: 3852, 11812.

#### Practical Thoughts.

(GOD IN HIS WORKS AND IN HIS WORD.)

1. God, in his works, proclaims his glory and his power by the starry expanse of the heavens. Ver. 1.

2. God, in his works, speaks constantly, in tones that never cease, day unto day and night unto night. Ver. 2.

3. God, in his works, speaks to all men, of every land and in every language. Vers. 3, 4.

4. God, in his word, speaks with transforming and converting power from sin to righteousness. Ver. 7.

5. God, in his word, speaks with enlightening power, imparting true wisdom to the teachable mind. Vers. 7, 8.

6. God, in his word, brings delight to the rightly constituted nature. Vers. 8, 10.

7. God, in his word, gives warning of danger, and reward to those who serve him. Ver. 11.

#### Sermon Outline.

BY REV. A. P. FOSTER, D.D.

This rare poem teaches the unity of God's revelations. He speaks to man in the physical creation; still more plainly in his written Word. No conflict is possible, then, between science and revelation. Any seeming contradiction is due to our failures in interpretation. The psalm considers:

1. The Physical Creation as a Revelation of God.
  1. *What the creation tells us.* (a) It proves a Creator; and (b) The Creator's glory. Ver. 1.
  2. *How it tells this.* (a) Constantly, (ver. 2;) (b) In all things, (ver. 2;) (c) To all men. The physical creation is every-where seen, a universal language; and in this respect has an advantage over the Bible. No wonder that the sun, from its prominence and splendor, has been worshiped as the chief revelation of God. Vers. 4-6.
  3. *The practical impressions of this revelation on man.* Creation produces an overwhelming sense of God's power and of man's needs. Natural theology shows man in misery below, and God in majesty above. An examination of nations and individuals left to the light of nature shows that man thus generally becomes fanatic and foolish, or reckless and despairing, or indifferent and worldly. Conscious of sin, he hopelessly awaits the divine thunder-bolt.

Hence, as an indispensable supplement to the revelations of creation, the psalm passes to consider:

- II. The written Word as an Admonition to Man. Vers. 7-14.

The Bible is intensely practical. While it reveals God with a fullness impossible to creation, its sole purpose is to declare only that which is needful for man's guidance.

1. *What the Word is.* From the poet's rhetorical and untechnical antitheses we learn that it is (a) a book of laws, (b) a book of testimony; (c) as such perfect, (d) and, therefore, infallible (e) and permanent; in short, (f) more valuable than the choicest of created things. Vers. 7-10.

2. *What it does.* (Vers. 7-11.) (a) It produces awe, "the fear of the Lord;" (b) brings comfort, "restoring the soul," as in margin; (c) gives wisdom; (d) secures happiness; and does all this (e) by guiding to salvation. Ver. 11. Our sins show such guidance necessary, while the Bible alone reveals those grand truths, and brings to bear those spiritual influences, which can save the soul. Vers. 12, 13.

3. *How the Word does this.* By revealing God as personally interested in us. This interest takes two directions, in supporting and in saving man. The Old Testament chiefly reveals God as man's Strength or Sustainer; the New Testament as man's Redeemer or Saviour. Ver. 14.

*Conclusion.* Thus, as creation leads us to the Sun, as its chief revelation of God's glory, the Word leads us to Christ as the culmination of all that is glorious in the Godhead, and as the supply of man's chief needs.

B. C. —]

## LESSON X.

[Sept. 7.

## CONFIDENCE IN GOD.—PSA. 27. 1-14.

**GOLDEN TEXT.**—The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear.—PSA. 27. 1.

INTRODUCTION.—This psalm expresses unshaken confidence in the midst of urgent dangers. The enemies of the psalmist have been foiled, (ver. 2.) but they still threaten him; the recurrence of an attack is imminent, (ver. 3;) he is closely watched, (ver. 6;) he prays earnestly, not without a consciousness that he has incurred God's anger, (ver. 9.) but with a certainty that his prayer is heard, that he will be delivered, pass the rest of his life near the sanctuary, and offer sacrifices of thanksgiving in God's tabernacle, (ver. 6.) The indications, if not conclusive, yet point naturally to the time when David was pursued by the army of Absalom, probably to the time when the last and decisive battle was about to be fought.—*Canon Cook*. But we should take a defective view of this psalm if, in reading it, we did not raise our eyes from David, and from all the faithful in their afflictions, to the sufferings of the divine David, the Man of Sorrows, and to his perfect resignation to the will of his Father, and to his steadfast trust in him, and to the glory to which those sufferings led.—*Wordsworth*.

1 The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the LORD is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?

2 When the wicked, even mine ene-

a Approached

1. The Lord is my light—*Light* is here that which issues from God as a beam of his light-giving countenance, (Psa. 4. 6,) that, as the light of the sun is the source of all life and growth in nature, so it is the source of all life and well-being in the human heart. Comp. Psa. 36. 9. Hence it is the usual figure of life, success, joy, and all good, negatively of deliverance, freedom, help, etc., in contrast to *darkness*, which is the figure of death, misfortune, danger, captivity, sorrow, etc.—*Hupfeld*. And my salvation—The powers of darkness are not to be feared, for the Lord, our light, destroys them; and the damnation of hell is not to be dreaded by us, for the Lord is our salvation.—*Spurgeon*. Strength of my life—Or, “stronghold of my life,” in which my life is preserved; or, it may be, “my living stronghold.” The expression, peculiarly suitable to David, does not occur elsewhere, but stands in close connection of thought with Psa. 18. 1.—*Canon Cook*. Of whom shall I be afraid—No night of sorrow can be so dark, no evil so fearful, no enemy so dreadful, as to cause those to tremble, despair, and perish who have God for their light, for their salvation, for the stronghold of their life.—*C. B. Moll*.

2. The wicked, even mine enemies—It is a hopeful sign for us when the wicked hate us; if our foes were godly men it would be a sore sorrow, but as for the wicked their hatred is better than their love.—*Spurgeon*. To eat up my

enemies and my foes, “came upon me to eat up my flesh, they stumbled and fell.

3 Though an host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear;

against me.

flesh—The expression, “to eat up my flesh,” suggested doubtless by David's early experience, compares his enemies to beasts of prey; cf. Psa. 14. 4, and 22. 13, 16.—*Canon Cook*. They stumbled—David may allude to some unrecorded event of the war before the final struggle, but the words probably express only his certainty of the enemies' discomfiture. The word “they” is emphatic, “as for them, they,” etc.—*Canon Cook*.

There were stones in the way which they never reckoned upon, and over these they made an ignominious tumble. This was literally true in the case of our Lord in Gethsemane, when those who came to take him went backward and fell to the ground; and herein he was a prophetic representative of all wrestling believers who, rising from their knees shall, by the power of faith, throw their foes upon their faces.—*Spurgeon*.

3. Though an host should encamp—

Literally, “Though a camp should encamp against me,” but the English idiom would hardly admit of such a rendering.—*Prowne*. It is evident that these must be the words of a leader or king; they were probably written in anticipation of an immediate advance of Absalom's host when “Israel and Absalom pitched in the land of Gilead.” 2 Sam. 17. 26.—*Canon Cook*. In this will I be confident—In spite of this, or for all this, I will trust. These first three verses are an outbreathing of the courage of faith.—*F. G. Hibbard*. My heart shall not fear—Doubtless

though war should rise against me, in this *will I be confident.*

4 One *thing* have I desired of the LORD, that will I seek after: that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold <sup>b</sup> the beauty of the LORD, and to inquire in his temple.

5 For <sup>1</sup> in the time of trouble he shall

<sup>b</sup> Or, the delight.

the shadow of anticipated trouble is, to timorous minds, a more prolific source of sorrow than the trouble itself, but faith puts a strengthening plaster to the back of courage, and throws out of the window the dregs of the cup of trembling.—*Spurgeon.* One *thing*—Divided aims tend to distraction, weakness, disappointment. The man of one book is eminent, the man of one pursuit is successful. Let all our affections be bound up in one affection, and that affection set upon heavenly things.—*Spurgeon.* **Have I desired**—Holy desires must lead to resolute action. The old proverb says, “Wishers and woulders are never good housekeepers,” and “Wishing never fills a sack.” Desires are seeds which must be sown in the good soil of activity, or they will yield no harvest.—*Spurgeon.* **Dwell in the house of the Lord**—The supreme blessedness of a life entirely devoted, like that of the priests, to the service of God, seems often to have forced itself upon the minds of the holy psalmists, (see Psalms 15, 23, 65, 84, etc., and note on 26. 8,) and upon none more than upon that of David, who was compelled so often to wander at a distance from the sanctuary.—*Perrone.* **All the days of my life**—This is not to be taken literally, but as of spirit and fellowship, and as a constant habit of sanctuary worship. **To behold the beauty of the Lord**—“Beauty,” here, has the sense of *grace, excellence*, especially redeeming grace. See Psalms 90. 17. The sense is the same as Psalms 63. 2, “As I have seen thee in the sanctuary,” a spiritual discernment of God in his manifold grace to man. The original is peculiar. It means to *look upon or into* the “beauty” or grace of Jehovah.—*F. G. Hibbard.* **To inquire**—Or, “to contemplate.” The Hebrew implies delight in contemplating.—*Canon Cook.* **In his temple**—The house or place of worship was now a *temple*, although it is, in this and the following verses, called *house, temple, and tent.*—*F. G. Hibbard.*

The Christian sanctuary, the place of public worship, is the place where, if anywhere on earth,

hide me in his pavilion: in the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide me; he shall set me up upon a rock.

6 And now shall mine head be lifted up above mine enemies round about me: therefore will I offer in his tabernacle sacrifices <sup>c</sup> of joy; I will sing, yea, I will sing praises unto the LORD.

<sup>c</sup> Isa. 4. 6.—*c* Of shouting.

we may hope to have our minds enlightened, our perplexities removed, our hearts comforted and sanctified by right views of God.—*Barnes.*

5. **In the time of trouble he shall hide me**—This sanctuary is now characterized as a place of *safety* for those who seek refuge, who find there shelter and protection against the pursuit of their enemies.—*C. B. Moll.* **His pavilion**—Literally, *booth*, constructed of branches of trees, but the word is used of the tabernacle. Psalms 76. 2. The expressions in this verse are figurative, and show that David’s mind dwelt wholly on the spiritual reality which the tabernacle represented.—*Canon Cook.* **In the secret of his tabernacle**—Were there no other place, he would put me in the *holy of holies*, so that an enemy would not dare to approach me.—*Adam Clarke.* The historic basis of the metaphor is found in the form of Oriental tents and encampments, where the emir has his tent in the center of the camp, and the inner apartment of the tent reserved for himself. This was the place of honor and greatest safety.—*F. G. Hibbard.* **He shall set me up upon a rock**—This is fulfilled to the Christian, who is firmly built on Christ the Rock.—*Origen.*

6. **Head be lifted up**—In this verse the psalmist undoubtedly predicts a speedy and complete deliverance and restoration to his home at Jerusalem.—*Canon Cook.* **Offer in his tabernacle**—His acknowledgments for deliverance should not be private merely, but in the most public manner.—*F. G. Hibbard.* **Sacrifices of joy**—Or, as in the margin, “shouting,” that is, offered with shouts of thankful exultation, or “with the blare of trumpets.”—*Canon Cook.* This means particularly the *thank-offerings*, because they were brought with songs of rejoicing and praise. The mention of singing and playing which immediately follows, shows that the reference is to them.—*C. B. Moll.*

He does not speak of jublations to be offered in his palace, and feasting in his banquetting halls, but holy mirth he selects as most fitting for so divine a deliverance.—*Spurgeon.*



7 Hear, O Lord, *when* I cry with my voice: have mercy also upon me, and answer me.

8 *When thou saidst*, Seek ye my face; my heart said unto thee, Thy face, LORD, will I seek.

9 Hide not thy face *far* from me; put not thy servant away in anger: thou

*d Or*, My heart said unto thee, Let my face seek thy face.—  
plains 8.—9 Those

7. Hear, O Lord—As in so many psalms of David there follows a rapid and complete change of tone. So long as the psalmist fixes his thoughts wholly on God's grace and promise, he has no feelings but joy and exultation; but when he reverts to his own state he is brought at once to his knees in earnest, almost plaintive prayers.—*Canon Cook*.

The pendulum of spirituality swings from prayer to praise. The voice which in the last verse was tuned to music is here tuned to crying. As a good soldier, David knew how to handle his weapons, and found himself much at home with the weapon of "all prayer."—*Spurgeon*.

8. When thou saidst—The meaning of this beautiful verse is clear, but the construction is difficult. The original runs thus, word for word: "To thee said my heart, *in answer to thy command*, 'Seek ye my face,' thy face, O Lord, will I seek." The psalmist hears the voice of invitation; his heart accepts and answers it, and, in order to express the completeness and promptitude of his acceptance, he puts the command and answer in direct juxtaposition. In plain, unimpassioned prose, the thought would be thus expressed: "Seek ye my face." That is the invitation which my heart heard and answered at once, "Thy face, Lord, will I seek." The heart pleads the command and invitation: it addresses itself at once to God: this, it says, is what I heard; when I heard I answered and obeyed.—*Canon Cook*. My heart said—The heart answers the divine call, consenting thereto as an echo of it.—*Calvin*.

In this verse we are taught that if we would have the Lord hear our voice we must be careful to respond to *his* voice. The true heart should echo the will of God as the rocks among the Alps repeat in sweetest music the notes of the peasant's horn.—*Spurgeon*.

9. Hide not thy face far—The inserted "far" of the Authorized Version does not help the sense of the passage, but mars it. The psalmist is seeking Jehovah's face, and the prayer is that the face of Jehovah may not be veiled

hast been thy help; leave me not, neither forsake me, O God of my salvation.

10 When my father and <sup>2</sup>my mother forsake me, then the LORD <sup>4</sup>will take me up.

11 Teach me thy way, O LORD, and lead me in <sup>2</sup>a plain path, because of <sup>2</sup>mine enemies.

*2* Isa. 49. 15.—Will gather me, Isa. 49. 11.—*2* A way of which observe me.

from him so that he cannot see it.—*C. A. Briggs*. Put not thy servant away in anger—God puts away many in anger for their supposed goodness, but not any at all for their confessed badness.—*John Trapp*. Leave me not—Other servants had been put away when they proved unfaithful, as, for instance, his predecessor, Saul; and this made David, while conscious of many faults, most anxious that divine long-suffering should continue him in favor. This is a most appropriate prayer for us under a similar sense of unworthiness.—*Spurgeon*.

10. When my father and my mother—The force and beauty of such an appeal depend upon the feeling that a parent's love is the strongest bond that can bind man to man, yet incomparably weaker than that which binds him to God.—*Canon Cook*. Forsake me—The extremest case of abandonment is supposed in order the more forcibly to illustrate the faithfulness of God. The Lord will take me up—Will espouse my cause, will uplift me from my woes, will carry me in his arms, will elevate me above my enemies, will at last receive me to his eternal dwelling-place.—*Spurgeon*.

11. Teach me thy way—Wily spies dodge his every step, and would gladly see what they have invented against him and wished for him realized. Should he enter the way of sin leading to destruction it would tend to the dishonor of God, just as, on the contrary, it is a matter of honor with God not to let his servant fall. Hence he prays to be led in the way of God, for a oneness of his own will with the divine renders a man inaccessible [to evil].—*Delitzsch*. A plain path—This *even* or *straight* path is the Lord's "way," as in the preceding member of the verse. See Psa. 26. 12. In it there are no dangers. Isa. 25. 8.—*F. G. Hibbard*. Because of mine enemies—Who watch all my steps for evil.

A path is here desired which shall be open, honest, straightforward, in opposition to the way of cunning, which is intricate, tortuous, dangerous. Good men seldom succeed in fine speculations and doubtful courses; plain simplicity is the best spirit

12 Deliver me not over unto the will of mine enemies: for <sup>3</sup> false witnesses are risen up against me, and such as breathe out cruelty.

13 *I had fainted*, <sup>4</sup> unless I had be-

<sup>1</sup> 1 Sam. 22. 9; 2 Sam. 16. 7, 8. —<sup>2</sup> Psa. 112. 7, 8.

for an heir of heaven; let us leave shifty tricks and political expediences to the citizens of the world—the New Jerusalem owns plain men for its citizens.—*Spurgeon*.

12. Deliver me not . . . mine enemies—

The exile of the king was brought about chiefly by the machinations and calumnies of Absalom's supporters.—*Canon Cook*. For false witnesses are risen up against me—Slander is an old-fashioned weapon out of the armory of hell, and is still in plentiful use: and no matter how holy a man may be, there will be some who will defame him.—*Spurgeon*. Breathe out cruelty—A strong but natural expression for a person, all whose thoughts and feelings are engrossed by a favorite purpose or employment, so that he cannot live or breathe without it. Compare the description of Saul's persecuting zeal in Acts 9. 1.—*Alexander*.

13. *I had fainted*—The original is abrupt and emphatic, omitting the consequence that had followed had he not trusted in God to be supplied by the imagination. Our English text supplies the omission by the words, "I had fainted;" but, as "the land of the living" is the place where he had believed to see the goodness of the Lord, and as this is to be contrasted with *sheol*, or the place of the dead, we should rather read, "*I had perished* unless I had believed," etc.—*F. G. Hibbard*. No words could express the misery, no plummet could fathom the depth, of the abyss of the contrary alternative. Blank silence was the only representative of such a supposition.—*Wordsworth*. To see the goodness—The Hebrew phrase which is familiar, almost peculiar, to David means to look with joy and triumph, elsewhere generally upon the defeat of enemies, but here, more in accordance with his better and deeper feelings, upon the "goodness" of Jehovah.—*Canon Cook*. In the land of the living—The land inhabited by a race living in the fear and in the grace of God; and such appears to be its meaning here. What David longed for, and was now assured of, was restoration to the city of God.—*Canon Cook*.

14. Wait on the Lord—Wait, which is twice repeated for emphasis, has the sense of *expect*, *hope*, and hence to be ready for, and answers well to the New Testament word "watch,"

believed to see the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living.

14 Wait <sup>5</sup> on the LORD; be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the LORD.

<sup>5</sup> Psa. 62. 1, 5; Isa. 25. 9; Hab. 2. 3.

(Matt. 24. 42;) or, as Peter says, "*Hope* to the end for the grace." 1 Pet. 1. 13.—*F. G. Hibbard*. Be of good courage—Or, "Be firm, and he will strengthen thy heart." The psalmist is sure of the result. Cf. Deut. 31. 7, where Moses addresses these words to Joshua, about to enter the Promised Land. David had that example before him, and could, therefore, wait with certainty of victory. From first to last his feelings are those of a hero depending wholly on God, and, therefore, full of hope.—*Canon Cook*. Wait, I say—David, in the words "*I say*," sets his own private seal to the word which, as an inspired man, he had been moved to write. It is *his* testimony as well as the command of God; and, indeed, he who writes these scanty notes has himself found it so sweet, so reviving, so profitable, to draw near to God, that on his own account he also feels bound to write, "*Wait, I say, on the Lord*."—*Spurgeon*.

#### Authorities to be Consulted.

See the references on Lessons VI and VII, which belong to this period in the life of David. Also, Sermons by C. Simeon, Bishop Sanderson, and the Preacher's Lantern, vol. ii, p. 305. Foster's Cyclopedia of Illustrations, [numbers marked with a star refer to poetical quotations,] ver. 1: \*545; 455, 2273; 2: 1434; 3: 6924, 8824; 4: \*49, 3975; 5: 4768, 5125; 8: 4539, 5246; 10: \*2438, \*2439, 5538; 11: \*1688; 14: 10915, 12176.

#### Practical Thoughts.

##### [GOD'S RELATION TO THE BELIEVER.]

1. The Lord is the believer's light, giving guidance in his way. Ver. 1.
2. The Lord is the believer's salvation, redeeming him from danger. Ver. 1.
3. The Lord is the believer's security, protecting him from danger. Vers. 1, 2.
4. The Lord is the believer's defense, guarding him from enemies. Vers. 2, 3.
5. The Lord is the believer's object of affection, whose grace and beauty he desires to contemplate. Ver. 4.
6. The Lord is the believer's victory, giving him triumph over all his adversaries. Ver. 6.

7. The Lord is the believer's help in trouble, responding to his cry and giving deliverance. Vers. 8, 9.

### Sermon Outline.

BY REV. FRANK RUSSELL.

**Introduction.**—Doubtless written by David, the occasion probably the suspicion of conspiracy engendered against him by reports of Doeg to the court. 1 Sam. 22. 9.

The first three verses are the key to the whole chapter, and, perhaps, as a porch is made last, they were written last. The whole psalm interprets them, and discloses a supreme trust in God which we need to study and secure.

1. *This confidence is conspicuous in the structure of the psalm.*

#### 1. The first three verses.

They open with shrill notes of a victor's trumpet. Attainment is consummated. The victory is over foes of whatever kind and violence. They, not he, stumbled and fell. Numbers and strength opposing were immaterial, host or war. Prov. 18. 10.

#### 2. Three more verses.

His soul seeks communion with God. His unity of purpose one thing. He would dwell in God's house. He is sure of God's care, the pavilion, tabernacle, high rock, and uplifting are his; so joy and songs.

3. **In six more verses** he prays, cries for answer, regards God's mercy, promises obedience. God will not leave, even if outcast from father and mother; would be led in a plain path.

4. **An exhortation closes.** He alludes to his

own experience, then urges to wait on the Lord with good courage.

11. *This confidence is complete.*

1. **There is no self in it.** Light, salvation, strength, are all of God.

2. **God's child can make it personal**, and say "my," "my own."

3. **He is in perfect peace.** The child cries, awakened by the rattling at the grate, or the wall, or the pattering on the roof—once in its mother's arms the sobs cease. The noise is neither abated nor explained. The child is at peace because confiding in the mother who enfolds it. So is our confidence in God.

111. *There is logic here.*

1. **Light is first.** Light is for vision and health. We see ourselves, our sin, helplessness, doom.

2. **Next is salvation.** In light our need is seen, and we cry to God.

3. **Then strength.** We are yet weak when salvation is come. There is no power in ourselves, but His strength is made perfect in weakness.

4. **God is all.** No glory in the flesh. Who shall separate us?

**Conclusion.**

1. This confidence is demanded.

2. In all God's attributes, mercy, faithfulness justice.

3. The soul needs it. Hosts do encamp about us, wars continually arise.

4. Every thing of self and the world is against us, God is for us. Our confidence is sure. Nights are wild on our ocean, with storms and tempests, but influences unseen, yet strong, poise the magnetic needle which storms do not swerve or touch.

B. C. —.]

## LESSON XI.

[Sept. 14,

WAITING FOR THE LORD.—Psa. 40. 1-17.

**GOLDEN TEXT.**—I delight to do my will, O my God.—Psa. 40. 8.

**INTRODUCTION.**—The history of David leaves us no doubt as to the time and circumstance under which this psalm was composed. It must have been some time after the complete awakening of his conscience to the deadly guilt contracted by Uriah's death, when the results of that act were manifested in the fearful disorders of his family, polluted by incest and murder; in the estrangement of his dearest friends and nearest kinsmen; in the triumph of malicious and slanderous enemies; in agonies of mind, accompanied and exaggerated by a terrible malady, of which the symptoms, elsewhere noted, are described most vividly in Psa. 38, the flesh diseased, the bones racked, the loins filled with fierce pain, the heart panting, strength failing, the eye darkened as with the shadow of death; all attributed by the psalmist himself to his own sin.—*Canon Cook.* In the first part (vers. 1-5) the memory is haunted with the intense griefs of the past, but the patient waiting has been rewarded, the deliverance effected, and songs of thanksgiving flow freely. In the second (vers. 6-10) the source of those feelings is described. They are derived from the sense of obedience to the inner and to the written law of hearty adhesion to the will and law of God, and of public recognition of God's gracious dealings. Vers. 11-17. Earnest prayers follow to the end; at first plaintive, indicating apprehension lest the relief should cease, and intense feeling of sin surrounding, grasping, bowing him down, taking light from the eye, and comfort from the heart; but they wind up with a full assurance of God's care, and a hope of speedy deliverance.—*Canon Cook.* All these things point to the period just preceding the revolt of Absalom. At that time there are indications that David was prostrate by disease, which gave full scope to the machinations of his son and

his abettors, from which he recovered only to witness their success.—*Canon Cook*. This psalm is best interpreted by classing it under the head of *Typical-Messianic*. This supposes David, the speaker, to be a type of Christ, and yet to utter things which cannot but remotely, if at all, have a just application to the type, but are only or fully true of the antitype; yet that so much is literally true of the type as fitly to make him a figure of him that was to come.—*Plumer*. Jesus is evidently here, and although it might not be a violent wresting of language to see both David and his Lord, both Christ and the Church, the double comment might involve itself in obscurity, and, therefore, we shall let the sun shine even though this should conceal the stars. Even if the New Testament were not so express upon it, we should have concluded that David spoke of our Lord in vers. 6-9, but the apostle in Heb. 10, 5-9, puts all conjecture out of court, and confines the meaning to Him who came into the world to do the Father's will.—*Spurgeon*.

1 I waited patiently for the LORD; and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry.

2 He brought me up also out of <sup>b</sup> a horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings.

a In waiting I waited.—b A pit of

1. **I waited patiently**—The Hebrew idiom, “waiting I waited,” forcibly expresses the intense feeling of expectation. I waited with my whole heart.—*Canon Cook*. **He inclined**—Mark the figure of inclining, as though the suppliant cried out of the lowest depression, and condescending love stooped to hear his feeble moans.—*Spurgeon*.

2. **An horrible pit**—Or, “pit of destruction.” The Hebrew word properly means “loud noise,” “uproar,” “crash.” The association of the two ideas, “pit” and “crash,” is natural. It sets before us a warrior falling into a deep pit, with crash of arms, amid the shouts of enemies. *Canon Cook*. **Miry clay**—Another figure is “mire of the marsh,” that is, water, in the miry bottom of which one can find no firm footing.—*Delitzsch*. Despondency of spirit, under the sense of God's withdrawals, and prevailing doubts and fears about the eternal state, are indeed a horrible pit and miry clay, and have been so to many a dear child of God.—*Henry*. **Feet upon a rock**—The high rock and the firm footsteps are the opposites of the deep pit and the yielding, miry bottom.—*Delitzsch*.

Some of the pits referred to in the Bible were prisons; one such I saw at Athens, and another at Rome. To these there were no openings, except a hole at the top, which served both for door and window. The bottoms of these pits were necessarily in a filthy and revolting state, and sometimes deep in mud. “He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay;” one of these filthy prisons being in the psalmist's view, in Isa. 38, 17, called “the pit of corruption,” or putrefaction and filth.—*John Gadsby*.

3 And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God: many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the LORD.

4 Blessed is that man that maketh the LORD his trust, and respecteth not the proud, nor such as turn aside to lies.

noise.—1 Psa. 2, 12; Jer. 17, 7.

3. **A new song**—That is, one celebrating with all the power of a recent gratitude a new and signal act of deliverance. The old forms, the customary expressions, the well-known hymns, were not enough. See chap. 33, 3.—*Perowne*. **Many shall see it**—The deliverance is such that all who know of the affliction would take knowledge of this signal mercy, and give thanks to God. All divine dispensations to individuals are intended also for social influence.—*F. G. Hibbard*. **Fear and . . . trust**—The terms *fear* and *hope*, or *trust*, do not seem at first view to harmonize, but David has not improperly joined them together, for no man will ever entertain the *hope* of the favor of God but he whose mind is first imbued with the *fear* of God. I understand *fear*, in general, to mean the feeling of piety which is produced in us by the knowledge of the power, equity, and mercy of God.—*John Calvin*.

4. **Blessed is that man**—Literally, *O the blessednesses*. The blessings coming on him who trusts in the Lord are multiform, countless, endless, immeasurable.—*Plumer*. **Respecteth not**—Or, “turneth not to;” the word is generally used of apostasy, turning to false gods.—*Canon Cook*. **The proud**—This word in the Psalms generally has reference to those who live without God, haughty and self-sufficient, having all their aims in the present world, and uncontrolled by the consciousness of a higher power. **Turn aside to lies**—By *lies* we may understand not only falsehoods, but also idols, which are lying vanities; earthly things, which disappoint all who trust in them; men,

5 Many, O LORD my God, are thy wonderful works *which thou hast done*,<sup>2</sup> and thy thoughts *which are to us-ward*:<sup>3</sup> they cannot be reckoned up in order unto thee: *if I would declare and speak of them*, they are more than can be numbered.

<sup>2</sup> Isa. 55. 8.—Or, none can order them unto thee.—<sup>3</sup> Heb. xiv. 11. Luke 24. 44.

who as a rock of confidence are a lie; or any fatal delusion or mistake respecting our religious hopes or views, especially, perhaps, such as spring from self-conceit.—*Purser*.

5. Wonderful works . . . thy thoughts—Works are his developed thoughts, or plans, while thoughts are his *desires*, which are reserved for accomplishment in their time, and which we know only in their fulfillment.—*F. G. Hibbard*. To us-ward—In modern phrase, *toward us*. A beautiful acknowledgment of a special providence. The end of all divine dispensation in nature and in grace is for man. If I would declare—He would do this, but because God, in the fullness of his wondrous works and thoughts of salvation, is absolutely without an equal, he is obliged to leave it undone, they are so powerful (numerous) that the enumeration of them falls far short of their powerful fullness.—*Delitzsch*. They cannot be reckoned, etc.—This translation expresses the sense of the original. The meaning is, "they are innumerable," no one can set them forth in order when giving thanks to God.—*Canon Cook*.

The wonders of the great salvation shall engage the counsels and fill up the praises of eternity; but the works and thoughts of Jehovah to our fallen race, especially as displayed in Christ Jesus the Son of his love, shall far exceed all finite powers of calculation, and shall be forever telling, yet untold.—*J. Morrison*.

6. Sacrifice—The connection of the thoughts is clear: Great and manifold are the proofs of thy loving-kindness, how am I to render thanks to thee for them? To this question he first of all gives a negative answer: God delights not in outward sacrifices.—*Delitzsch*. Sacrifice and offering—The sacrifices are named in a twofold way: (a) According to the material of which they consist, namely, the animal sacrifice, and the meal or meat offering. (b) According to their purpose, in accordance with which they bring about either the turning toward one of the good pleasure of God, the turning away of the divine displeasure.—*Delitzsch*. Mine ears hast thou opened—Ears hast thou dug for me,

6 Sacrifice<sup>2</sup> and offering thou didst not desire; mine ears hast thou<sup>d</sup> opened: burnt offering and sin offering hast thou not required.

7 Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is<sup>4</sup> written of me.

<sup>2</sup> 6, 6; Matt. 9. 13; Heb. 10. 5.—<sup>d</sup> Dugged, Exodus 21. 6.—John 5. 39.

that is, created for me instruments for hearing. It is accordingly the business of man to use them in accordance with the divine will. This may be partly by *observing* God's word, partly by *following* God's commands.—*C. B. Moll*. The very remarkable rendering by the LXX, quoted in Heb. 10. 5, "A body thou hast prepared me," or "fitted for me," may be explained by supposing that the opening of the ear was regarded as equivalent to the consecration of all bodily faculties to God's service.—*Canon Cook*. Sacrifice . . . offering . . . burnt-offering . . . sin offering—The enumeration covers all the offerings necessary to entering into and continuing in covenant with God. The first two are generic terms for bloody and unbloody offerings, the last two specific of bloody sacrifices; the "burnt-offering," (*'olah*), a self-dedicatory sacrifice, the "sin-offering," (*khattuah*), an expiation.—*F. G. Hibbard*. Hast thou not required—It is remarkable that all the offerings and sacrifices which were of an atoning or cleansing nature, offered under the law, are here enumerated by the psalmist and the apostle, to show that *none* of them, nor *all* of them, could take away sin, and that the grand sacrifice of Christ was that alone which could do it.—*Clarke*. The psalmist re-echoes the lofty utterance of the Prophet Samuel, made when Saul was rejected, a generation before this psalm was composed. See 1 Sam. 15. 22.

7. Lo, I come—The first clause may be rendered, "Lo, I come with a rolled book written concerning me." The most probable interpretation is that the book is the book of the law, the Pentateuch; David means that by presenting himself with it he declares his intention to obey it perfectly, and though not certain, the most probable meaning is, that in the words "concerning me," he alludes more especially to the instructions touching the duties of a king in Deut. 17. 14-20.—*Canon Cook*. Volume—From a word which signifies *to roll*. The roll was anciently the invariable form of books among the Jews, until the days of our Saviour. Luke 4. 17. Even to this day they sometimes use that

8 I<sup>5</sup> delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is<sup>6</sup> within my heart.

9 I have preached righteousness in the great congregation: lo, I have not refrained my lips, O LORD,<sup>6</sup> thou knowest.

10 I<sup>7</sup> have not hid thy righteousness within my heart; I have declared thy faithfulness and thy salvation: I have

not concealed thy loving-kindness and thy truth from the great congregation.

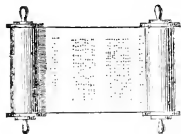
11 Withhold not thou thy tender mercies from me, O LORD:<sup>8</sup> let thy loving-kindness and thy truth continually preserve me.

12 For innumerable evils have compassed me about:<sup>9</sup> mine iniquities have

<sup>5</sup> John 4. 34; Rom. 7. 22.—<sup>6</sup> In the midst of my bowels.

<sup>6</sup> Psa. 139. 2.—<sup>7</sup> Acts 20. 20.—<sup>8</sup> Psa. 43. 3.—<sup>9</sup> Psa. 38. 4.

form. Often there were two rollers of wood near to each other.



Roll of Book.

As one turned to unfold the law, the other received it.—*Plumer.*

In the volume of the book—That is, not merely in one or two texts, or in one

or two pages, but in the entire roll of the law.—*Wordsworth.* It is written of me—It is prescribed to me, or laid upon me as a duty, exactly in the same sense as the words occur 2 Kings 22. 13.—*Perowne.* The typical application to our Lord is obvious and very striking. As David presented himself before God in spirit with the book of the law describing his duties and rights, so the Saviour came with the word of God bearing witness to him, and expressing that will which he fulfilled.—*Canon Cook.*

8. I delight to do thy will—“Delight” in God’s will is the true test of a spiritual mind, and of the highest obedience. This was Christ’s profession John 4. 34; 17. 4.—*F. G. Hibbard.* Thy law is within my heart—The law of God is not to be kept in books, but in the midst of our heart, that we may rightly understand the same, admire it, and observe it.—*Martin Geier.*

9. I have preached—The word *preach* is too modern and technical. The idea is, to announce, publish, make manifest. This was Christ’s distinctive office.—*F. G. Hibbard.* Righteousness—This was the subject announced, called, verse, 10, “thy righteousness,” “thy faithfulness,” “thy salvation,” “thy loving-kindness and thy truth.” These are evangelical themes involving the justice and faithfulness of God in the methods of atonement and pardon. Congregation is the title of the collective body of the Hebrew nation as a religious community, an ecclesiastical rather than a civil designation.—*F. G. Hibbard.* The new song which Jehovah put into his mouth he has also really sung.—*Delitzsch.*

10. Have not hid thy righteousness—Five things are said to have been published

and made known. (1) *God’s righteousness, rectitude, equity, or justice* in all things. This is the great pillar of God’s government. So long as God is just, there is hope for those who have a good cause. (2) *God’s faithfulness*; the word has the same root as *amen*; it signifies *stability, truth, fidelity* to engagements. (3) *God’s loving-kindness, or mercy, favor, kindness, goodness.* See on Psa. 17. 7. (4) *God’s truth, including his sincerity and veracity.* See on Psa. 15. 2. (5) *God’s salvation.* To those who trust his righteousness, faithfulness, loving-kindness, and truth, salvation is sure to come, bringing with it full redemption.—*Plumer.* Have not concealed—Words are heaped upon words to express the eager forwardness of a heart burning to show forth its gratitude. No elaborate description could so well have given us the likeness of one whose life was a thanksgiving.—*C. B. Moll.*

11. Withhold not—With this verse begins the second part of the psalm, which runs altogether in a different strain; reflecting on his deep sinfulness the psalmist is full of grief, and expresses his feelings in earnest prayers, sad confessions, imprecations against his enemies, and longings for deliverance.—*Canon Cook.* Withhold not—The same word is translated “refrain,” in ver. 9. The psalmist evidently alludes to that passage. He had not refrained or “shut up” his lips, and he prays that God will not shut up his mercies, or “bowels of compassion.”—*Canon Cook.* Continually preserve me—That is, day by day, without intermission. In moments of peril and intervals of quiet we alike need the ever-present help of God.—*F. G. Hibbard.*

12. Iniquities—The word is sometimes used for sin, and sometimes for punishment of sin.—*F. G. Hibbard.* It is the utterance of the suffering Messiah, whose words we heard in vers. 7, 8, bearing the sins of the whole world, as its proxy and representative, and as its vicarious sacrifice for sin and for reconciliation with God.—*Wordsworth.* Not able to look up—“Not able to see.” He cannot see because he is closely

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taken hold upon me, so that I am not able to look up: they are more than the hairs of mine head; therefore my heart faileth me.

13 Be pleased, O LORD, to deliver me: O LORD, make haste to help me.

14 Let them be ashamed and confounded together that seek after my soul to destroy it; let them be driven backward and put to shame that wish me evil.

*of Enaketh—10 Num. 5, 19;*

encompassed on all sides, and a free and open view is thereby altogether taken from him, (the expression is used elsewhere of loss of sight. 1 Sam. 3. 2; 4. 15; 1 Kings 41. 4.)—*Delitzsch.* **My heart faileth**—David finds no support, no comfort, in his own heart; it is like a false friend, deserting him in his bitter need.—*Canon Cook.*

The sight of our sins in their own colors would drive us to distraction if we had not at the same time some sight of a saviour.—*Henry.*

13, 14. **Deliver**—The ever-recurring cry of the penitent, cast down yet not despairing. His own heart has forsaken him, but he can still turn to God.—*Canon Cook.* **My soul**—"Soul" is here taken in the sense of *life*.—*F. G. Hibbard.* **Driven back**—The persecuted one wishes that the purpose of his deadly foes may, as it were, rebound against the protection of God and miserably miscarry.—*Delitzsch.* **Wish me evil**—*Will, or purpose,* "evil" to me. It is translated *desire* in Psalm 70. 2, and sometimes *delight*, but generally signifies either will, or that disposition of mind which induces will or choice.—*F. G. Hibbard.*

15, 16. **Desolate**—The word may be taken in the sense of *astonished*, struck dumb with fear, (Jer. 18. 16,) or of *laid waste*, as Ezekiel 35. 12.—*F. G. Hibbard.* **Aha**—An exclamation at once of mockery and triumph. Ps. 35. 21; Ezek. 25. 3; 26. 2. **Rejoice and be glad**—Note who the blessed objects of his petitions are: not all men, but some men; "I pray for them, I pray not for the world." He pleads for seekers: the lowest in the kingdom, the babes of the family; those who have true desires, longing prayers, and consistent endeavors after God.—*Spurgeon.* **Those that seek thee . . . such as love thy salvation**—A description of character in marked contrast to that of his enemies. The Hebrew word rendered "salvation" is used to denote deliverance of any kind, temporal or spiritual, and the connection must indicate its quality and extent. Here it is spiritual, alluding to verses 1-3.—*F. G. Hibbard.*

15 Let them be desolate for a reward of their shame that say unto me, Aha, aha!

16 Let all those that seek thee rejoice and be glad in thee: let such as love thy salvation say continually, The LORD be magnified.

17 But I am poor and needy; <sup>10</sup> yet the LORD thinketh upon me: thou art my help and my deliverer; make no tarrying, O my God.

*Josh. 1. 6; 1 Peter 5. 7.*

17. **Poor and needy**—The king might use these words truly at any time, most naturally in a season of deep affliction.—*Canon Cook.* **Thinketh upon me**—The word denotes *special thought*, either in the sense of *esteem, value, or of plan, device*. Both united in David. God regarded him with marked favor, and devised for his deliverance. His love and his wisdom are ever toward the humble.—*F. G. Hibbard.* **Make no tarrying**—Our low estate is not despised by God. He as readily goes to a hovel as to a palace. He has powerful leanings to the poor and sorrowful. Nor will he make any *tarrying* when the right time for their deliverance comes.—*Plumer.*

#### Authorities to be Consulted.

See Spurgeon's Treasury of David, Perowne on the Psalms, etc. Foster's Cyclopaedia of Illustrations, [numbers marked with a star refer to poetical quotations,] ver. 1: \*2952, 12177; 2: 5171, 6656; 3: \*2448, 11728; 4: \*2903, 5812; 5: 6849, 10499; 6: 5155; 7: \*2632; 8: 1488, 3887; 10: 923; 7392; 14: 6055; 17 4109.

#### Practical Thoughts.

##### [THE MERCIES OF THE LORD.]

1. God heeds the cry of those who call upon him with patient waiting. Ver. 1.
2. God lifts up those who are in trouble, and gives them a firm footing on the promises. Ver. 2.
3. God causes the reward of those who seek him to be noticed by others, as a motive to his service. Ver. 3.
4. God's mercies to his people are innumerable and beyond telling. Ver. 5.
5. God's mercies come not to the formal worshiper, but to him who keeps the law in his heart. Vers. 7, 8.
6. God will not withhold his mercy from those who do not withhold their testimony. Vers. 10, 11.
7. God regards even the least of his servants, and sees him in his troubles. Ver. 17.

B. C. —J

## LESSON XII.

[Sept. 21.

## A SONG OF PRAISE.—Psa. 103. 1-22.

**GOLDEN TEXT.**—Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits.—Psa. 103. 2.

INTRODUCTION.—As in the lofty Alps some peaks rise above all others, so among even the inspired Psalms there are heights of song which overtop the rest. This one hundred and third psalm has ever seemed to us to be the Monte Rosa of the divine chain of mountains of praise, glowing with a ruddier light than any of the rest. It is as the apple-tree among the trees of the wood, and its golden fruit has a flavor such as no fruit ever bears unless it has been ripened in the full sunshine of mercy. It is man's reply to the benedictions of his God, his song on the mount answering to his Redeemer's sermon on the mount.—*Spurgeon*. *Authorship*.—Hengstenberg, holding the originality of the superscriptions, defends the opinion of a composition by David, finding resemblances to the preceding psalm, which he assigns to the same author. Delitzsch and others, observing the same resemblances, and drawing a like inference, refer it, as they do Psalm 102, to a writer near the close of the captivity. Perowne thinks that nothing certain can be determined as to the date or the author. Alexander favors the hypothesis maintained by Hengstenberg, that this is the psalm of *mercy and judgment* promised in Psa. 101.—*J. F. McCurdy*. *Divisions*.—In verse 1 the author calls upon himself to bless God: first, for rich personal experience of the divine mercy, (verses 2-5;) secondly, for his forgiving grace and righteous judgments to Israel, (verses 6-12;) thirdly, for his tender consideration of human infirmity, (verses 13-16;) fourthly, for his faithful covenant mercy to such as fear him every-where, (verses 17, 18;) fifthly, for his universal dominion, for which angels, men, and all his works, should praise him, (verses 19-22.) The last clause of the psalm repeats the sentiment of verse 1, thus rounding and completing this incomparable ode.—*F. G. Hubbard*.

1 Bless the LORD, O my soul; and all that is within me, *bless* his holy name.

2 Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits:

† Isa. 33. 24; Matt. 9. 2; Mark 2. 5;

1. **Bless the Lord**—To “bless the Lord” is to *praise* him by declaring his attributes and works, and offering thanksgiving. To “bless” an individual man is to invoke the favor of God upon him.—*F. G. Hubbard*. **O my soul**—It is to be a soul-work, not formal or lip service. **All that is within me**—Not as opposed to outward or mere lip service, but expressing the desire to enlist every thought, faculty, power, the heart with all his affections, the will, the conscience, the reason; in a word, the whole spiritual being, all in man that is best and highest, in the same heavenly service.—*Perowne*.

Let others forbear, if they can: “Bless the Lord, O my soul.” Let others murmur, but do thou *bless*. Let others bless themselves, their idols, but do thou *bless the Lord*. Let others use only their tongue, but, as for me, I will cry, “Bless the Lord, O my soul.” “*And all that is within me, bless his holy name.*” Many are our faculties, emotions, and capacities, but God has given them all to us, and they ought all to join in chorus to his praise.—*Spurgeon*.

2. **Forget not**—There is nothing the soul of man is so prone to forget as to render thanks that are due, and more especially thanks that

3 Who <sup>1</sup>forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth <sup>2</sup>all thy diseases;

4 Who redeemeth thy life from

Luke 7. 47.—† Exod. 15. 26; Jer. 17. 14.

are due to God.—*Delitzsch*. **All his benefits**—He that has been blessed, and refuses to bless, has sunk from the state of a man to that of a beast.—*Hengstenberg*.

Memory is very treacherous about the best things; by a strange perversity, engendered by the fall, it treasures up the refuse of the past, and permits priceless treasures to lie neglected. It is tenacious of grievances, and holds benefits all too loosely. It needs spurring to its duty, though that duty ought to be its delight.—*Spurgeon*.

3. **Who forgiveth**, etc.—“Who forgiveth all thine iniquities,” so that not one is unforgiven; and “healeth all thy diseases,” so that not a trace remains of one.—*Canon Cook*. **Thine iniquities**—Thine iniquities are iniquities. There is nothing just or right in thee. Thy very nature is an in-equity, bringing forth in-equities. In-equities toward thy God, in-equities toward thy neighbor, and in-equities toward thyself, make up the whole of thy life. Thou art a bad tree, and a bad tree cannot bring forth good fruit.—*John Pulsford*. **Healeth all thy diseases**—It doubtless has a chief reference to diseases of the soul. Psa. 41. 4; Isa. 1. 6;



destruction; who crowneth thee with loving-kindness and tender mercies;

5 Who satisfieth thy mouth with good things; so that thy youth is renewed like the eagle's.

6 The Lord executeth righteousness and judgment for all that are oppressed.

Exod. 34. 6; Num. 14. 18; Dent. 5. 10; Neh. 9. 17; Jer. 32. 18.

6. 10; 53. 5. God never bestows pardon without granting with it renewal, by which the corruptions of our hearts are cured. — *Pence*. What is pride, but lunacy; what is anger, but a fever; what is avarice, but a dropsy; what is lust, but a leprosy; what is sloth, but a dead palsy! — *Horne*.

God gives efficacy to medicine for the body, and his grace sanctifies the soul. Spiritually we are dally under his care, and he visits us, as the surgeon does his patient, *healing* still (for that is the exact word) each malady as it arises. No disease of our soul battles his skill, he goes on healing *all*, and he will do so until the last trace of taint has gone from our nature. The two *alts* of this verse are further reasons for all that is within us praising the Lord. — *Spurgeon*.

4. From destruction — *From death* — from the *grace*. The word is elsewhere translated *pit*, *grave*, *corruption*; but it denotes a state of death in which the body returns to corruption. Here, also, in the idea of resumption from the grave, the germ of the doctrine of the resurrection is discovered. — *F. G. Hubbard*.

5. Who satisfieth thy mouth — The Chaldee Version interprets "thy day of age," a translation for which some authority may be alleged; it has the advantage also that it makes the two parts of the verse in some sort to correspond: "Who satisfies thine age with good, so that thy youth is renewed like an eagle." If David wrote this psalm in old age the verse in this rendering would have a special significance. The longings of a declining age can only be satisfied by faith in God, the giver of hope better than the natural life. — *Canon Cook*. Youth is renewed like the eagle's — Who gains fresh strength after the moulting of its feathers, (Isa. 40. 31; Micah 1. 16;) so Israel recovers fresh power after distress; so the Church gains strength from persecution; so the body will rise glorious from the grave, and "be caught up to meet the Lord in the air." 1 Thess. 4. 17. — *Wordsworth*.

6. The Lord, etc. — The psalmist passes from his own experience to that of his people. — *Canon Cook*. His range of vision being widened from himself, the poet now, in vers. 6-18,

7 He made known his ways unto Mo'ses, his acts unto the children of Is'ra-el.

8 The <sup>o</sup> Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and <sup>a</sup>plenteous in mercy.

9 He <sup>d</sup>will not always chide; neither will he keep his anger for ever.

a Great of mercy. — d Isa. 57. 16; Jer. 3. 5; Micah 7. 18

describes God's gracious and fatherly conduct toward sinful and perishing men, and that as it shines forth from the history of Israel and is known and recognized in the light of revelation. — *Dollitzsch*. Judgment . . . righteousness — The latter the principle, the former the act or sentence of justice. The one implies the discernment of the will of God, or wisdom to govern; the other, the executive energy to adjust the administration of government to that standard. — *F. G. Hubbard*.

7, 8. He made known his ways — The *ways* are not those to be trodden by men, but those followed by God in his march through the history of the world. — *C. B. Moll*. Unto Moses — Moses was made to see the manner in which the Lord deals with men; he saw this at each of the three periods of his life, in the court, in retirement, and at the head of the tribes of Israel. To him the Lord gave specially clear manifestations of his dispensations and modes of ruling among mankind, granting to him to see more of God than had before been seen by mortal man, while he communed with him upon the mount. — *Spurgeon*. His acts are his deeds of righteousness, deliverance, and sustentation. Psa. 9. 12; 78. 11; Exod. 34. 10. See John 5. 17. — *Canon Cook*.

9. He will not always chide — "He will not always judge" is the more literal and correct rendering. — *J. F. McCurdy*. Unto the children of Israel — While God revealed his plans to Moses, he showed himself in acts unto the Israelites by delivering, leading, protecting them, by giving them discipline and needed trial. Merciful and gracious — The psalmist names these traits of the Divine nature as illustrated in his acts. Neither will he keep his anger — He is not only long in anger, that is, waiting a long time before he lets his anger loose, but when he contends, that is, interposes judicially, this, too, is not carried to the full extent. Chap. 78. 38. The procedure of his righteousness is regulated, not according to our sins, but according to his purpose of mercy. — *Dollitzsch*. The passage applies to the disciplinary and effective dispensations of God toward his children, as

10 He <sup>5</sup> hath not dealt with us after our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities.

11 For <sup>6</sup> as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him.

12 As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he <sup>6</sup> removed our transgressions from us.

13 Like <sup>7</sup> as a father pitieth his children, so the LORD pitieth them that fear him.

<sup>5</sup> Ezra 9. 13.—<sup>6</sup> According to the height of the heaven.—<sup>8</sup> Exod.

the context shows, (comp. Exod. 34. 6, 7; Psa. 78. 38,) not his judgments on the wicked, as in Psa. 73. 18-20; 9. 17.—*F. G. Hibbard.*

10. **He hath not dealt.**—We ought to praise the Lord for what he has not done, as well as what he has wrought for us; even the negative side deserves our adoring gratitude. Up to this moment, at our very worse estate, we have never suffered as we deserve to suffer; our daily lot has not been apportioned upon the rule of what we merited, but on the far different measure of undeserved kindness.—*Spurgeon.*

11. **As the heaven is high above the earth**—The highest measure of comparison the mind can grasp. **So great is his mercy**—This shows he is speaking of God's fatherly chastisements of his people. He looks at their sin in the light of their earthly misery and temptation, (ver. 14,) and mingles compassion with severity "that we might be partakers of his holiness." Heb. 12. 10.—*F. G. Hibbard.*

12. **As far as the east is from the west**—Words which gained new force in the mouths of those who had been gathered from the far-off regions of the East to their own homes. God had removed them from the west to the east, and now he has brought them back to their own homes, and has removed their sins as far as the east is from the west.—*Wordsworth.* **So far hath he removed our transgressions**—A testimony to the witness of absolute forgiveness and acceptance worthy of the New Testament.—*F. G. Hibbard.*

13, 14. **Like as a father pitieth . . . for he knoweth**—His fatherly compassion is (verse 14) based upon the frailty and perishableness of man, which are known to God, much the same as God's promise after the Flood not to decree a like judgment again. Gen. 8. 21.—*Delitzsch.* The life and death of God manifest in the flesh are the best comment upon these signal words of

14 For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we *are* dust.

15 *As for* man, his days *are* as grass; as a flower of the field so he flourisheth:

16 For the wind passeth over it, and <sup>c</sup> it is gone; and the place thereof shall know it no more.

17 But the mercy of the LORD *is* from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness <sup>b</sup> unto children's children;

<sup>6</sup> Isaiah 43. 25; Eph. 1. 7.—<sup>7</sup> Malachi 3. 17.—<sup>c</sup> It is not.—20. 6.

prophecy.—*Canon Cook.* **Our frame**—The *frame* does not denote here the moral nature of man, (Gen. 6. 5; 9. 21; Deut. 31. 21,) the inherited disposition of his heart, (Psa. 51. 7,) but the frame of *dust*, (Gen. 3. 7,) like a potter's vessel. Job 10. 8 *f.*; Isa. 29. 16; 45. 9 *f.*—*C. B. Moll.*

15, 16. **His days are as grass**—Grass, springing up suddenly, growing rapidly, cut down by the mower, or withering speedily in the Oriental sun; affording a strong illustration of the transitoriness of human life. **The wind passeth over it**—The allusion is to the east and south-east winds, which, coming from the hot desert of Arabia, pass over Palestine with vehemence, destroying life, withering grass and herbage, and exhausting the strength of men and animals.—*F. G. Hibbard.* **It is gone**—Hebrew, *It is not.* Such is our transient mortal life. But the language applies specially to wicked and worldly men who have their portion in this life and forget God. See Job 20. 9; Psa. 37. 10; 73. 19, 20.—*F. G. Hibbard.* **The place thereof**—The place in which it grew is as if it had never been there; has no recollection of the day when it grew there and flourished. As the flower that was and is not, so is man's estate and hope.—*Canon Cook.*

17, 18. **But**—The adversative sense of the conjunction marks the contrast between the perishable and frail in man (vers. 15, 16) and the everlasting "mercy" and faithfulness of God to "such as keep his covenant."—*F. G. Hibbard.* **The mercy of the Lord**—In the midst of this plant-like, frail destiny, there is, however, one strong ground of comfort—there is an everlasting power which raises all those who link themselves with it above the transitoriness involved in nature's laws, and makes them eternal like itself. This power is the mercy of God, which spans itself above all those who fear him

18 To<sup>9</sup> such as keep his covenant, and to those that remember his commandments to do them.

19 The Lord hath prepared his throne in the heavens; and<sup>10</sup> his kingdom ruleth over all.

20 Bless the LORD, ye his angels, that excel in strength, that<sup>11</sup> do his

<sup>9</sup> Deut. 7. 9.—<sup>10</sup> Isa. 47. 7. —<sup>11</sup> d Mighty in strength.

like an eternal heaven. This is God's righteousness, which rewards faithful adherence to his covenant and conscientious fulfillment of his precepts in accordance with the order of redemption, and shows itself even to children's children, according to Exod. 20. 6; 34. 7; Deut. 7. 9, on into a thousand generations, that is, into infinity.—*Delitzsch*. To such as keep his covenant—A covenant is a bond or pledge between two parties. Those who keep their part of it will find God not slack in performing his part. He will reward them with his favor here and heaven hereafter. He will watch over their children after them. He will regard them with an eye of tender affection, and will not forget them in time of need.

19, 20. The Lord hath prepared—With this begins a new division in the psalm. Bless the Lord, etc.—See *Psa.* 29. 1; 148. 2. The angels (or archangels) close to God's throne, excelling in might, (marg., mighty in strength, *Isa.* 13. 3; 40. 26; *Joel* 3. 9, 11; *Rev.* 10. 1.) executing his behests, and listening to catch any intimation of his pleasure, are first addressed; next, the unnumbered host of ministering spirits (see *Luke* 2. 13; *Psa.* 104. 4) that do his will; next, all his works (*Psa.* 148) in all parts of his infinite dominion; and, last of all, the psalmist himself, least and least worthy of all, after a commemoration of Jehovah's perfection, mercy, long-suffering, tenderness, and ineffable majesty, stirs up his own spirit to join the chorus of universal praise.—*Cumt Cook*.

Ye his angels—His call to these to join in the praise of Jehovah has its parallels only in *Psa.* 29 and 148. It arises from the consciousness of the Church on earth that it stands in living, like-minded fellowship with the angels of God, and that it possesses a dignity which rises above all created things, even the angels which are appointed to serve it. *Chap.* 91. 11.—*Delitzsch*. Excel in strength—Hebrew, *Mighty of strength*. The word *mighty* (English version, "excel") denotes the highest reach of finite "strength," skill, and endurance, such as, when applied to man, distinguishes the hero-warrior.

commandments, hearkening unto the voice of his word.

21 Bless ye the LORD, all ye<sup>12</sup> his hosts; ye<sup>13</sup> ministers of his, that do his pleasure.

22 Bless the LORD, all his works in all places of his dominion; bless the LORD, O my soul.

<sup>12</sup> Matt. 6. 10.—<sup>13</sup> Gen. 32. 7.—<sup>14</sup> Dan. 7. 9.

—*F. G. Hibbard*. That do his commandments—That execute his word. They are the executive messengers of God. Harkening unto the voice—Denoting both attentiveness to learn and promptness to execute. "As soon as they hear the voice of God they promptly obey."—*Hammond*.

21, 22. Hosts—Not the heavenly bodies, (as in *Deut.* 4. 19; 17. 3; *Psa.* 33. 6,) but the collective whole of all orders of celestial beings, as *1 Kings* 22. 19, and *Psa.* 148. 2. Compare *Dan.* 7. 10.—*F. G. Hibbard*. O my soul—As if to place his own obligation above that of all other beings, he fitly begins and ends the psalm alike, with the same personal call, "Bless the Lord, O my soul."—*F. G. Hibbard*.

#### Authorities to be Consulted.

Foster's Cyclopedia of Illustrations, [numbers marked with a star refer to poetical illustrations,] ver. 1: \*1510; 2: 2337, 6848; 3: 4352, 8798; 4: 3902, 7950; 5: \*2414, 12332; 6: \*2966, 10063; 8: 2523; 11: 11505; 13: \*2597, 8673; 15: \*2335; 16: 10646; 17: 10519; 19: 3481; 20: 1105.

#### Practical Thoughts.

##### [THE BENEFITS OF THE LORD.]

1. The benefits of the Lord are such as to call forth the whole nature of man in thankful praise. Ver. 1.
2. The Lord bestows forgiveness of sin as his first chief blessing to man. Ver. 3.
3. The Lord bestows health and healing upon the body, as an image of greater spiritual blessings. Ver. 3.
4. The Lord bestows mercies in such constant course as to make our life ever new. Ver. 5.
5. The Lord reveals his plans to some of his people, but his acts of grace may be known by all. Ver. 7.
6. The Lord shows his benefits in his children as well as in his blessings, since discipline in his hand is graciously and tenderly given. Vers. 9, 10.
7. The Lord removes his people's sins so far that they are utterly forgotten. Ver. 12.

## FOURTH QUARTER.

## THREE MONTHS WITH SOLOMON AND THE BOOKS OF WISDOM.

B. C. 1015.]

LESSON I.

[Oct. 5.

SOLOMON SUCCEEDING DAVID.—1 Kings 1. 22-35.

**GOLDEN TEXT.**—And thou, Solomon, my son, know thou the God of thy father, and serve him with a perfect heart and with a willing mind.—1 CHRON. 28. 9.

TIME.—B. C. 1015.

PLACE.—Jerusalem.

CONNECTING LINK.—Adonijah's rebellion. 1 Kings 1. 1-21.

**INTRODUCTION.**—*The Books of the Kings.*—In the Hebrew canon they formed one book. They follow the books of Samuel, which are also called Books of the Kings. Indeed, the whole story, from the beginning of Judges to the end of Kings, runs on as one unbroken narrative. First Kings takes up the Hebrew history at the time when David was old and stricken in years, B. C. 1015; Second Kings ends with the beginning of the captivity of Judah in Babylon, B. C. 586, and the burning of the temple, though notice is made of the liberation and death of Jehoiachim more than twenty-six years later. The author cannot be identified. Ancient tradition, in the Talmud, names Jeremiah; some have supposed them compiled by Ezra or Baruch. The books, which were originally one, have a very marked unity of design, plan, and style, and were first divided in the Septuagint. They are, in large measure, a compilation from existing documents. They have always had a place in the Jewish canon.—*Schaff. Adonijah's conspiracy.*—Adonijah, the eldest living son of David after Absalom's death, saw that, through the influence of Nathan and Bathsheba, Solomon was likely to succeed to the throne. He conspired to make himself king during the helpless old age of David, and united with him in the plot Joab, the general of the army, and Abiathar, the high-priest. At a meeting, near Jerusalem, the proclamation was made that Adonijah was king. But the prompt action of Nathan, and the power of Bathsheba over the aged king, brought the plot to naught before it was fairly wrought out in action.—*J. L. H.* Nathan informed Solomon's mother, Bathsheba, (see at 2 Sam. II. 3,) that Adonijah was making himself king, and advised her, in order to save her life and that of her son Solomon, to go to the king and remind him of his promise on oath that her son Solomon should be king after him, and to inquire why Adonijah had become king. If Adonijah had really got possession of the throne he would probably have put Solomon and his mother out of the way, according to the barbarous custom of the East, as his political opponents.—*Keil.*

22 And, lo, while she yet talked with the king, Na'than the prophet also came in.

23 And they told the king, saying,

22. **While she**—Bathsheba, the mother of Solomon, and once the wife of Uriah, whose beauty had excited the king's passion and led to the murder of Uriah, with all its fateful consequences. She was now the favorite wife of David, with vast influence, eager to secure her son Solomon the promised succession to the throne. **Yet talked**—Bathsheba followed the advice of Nathan, and went to the king into the inner chamber, since the very aged king, who was waited upon by Abishag, could not leave his room, and, bowing low before him, communicated to him what Adonijah had taken in hand in opposition to his will, and without his knowledge.—*Keil.* **Nathan the prophet**—See 3rd Quarter, Lesson III, verse 3, notes. **Also came in**—When he was announced to the king

Behold Na'than the prophet. And when he was come in before the king, he bowed himself before the king with his face to the ground.

Bathsheba retired, just as afterward Nathan went away when the king had Bathsheba called in again. Comp. verse 23 with verse 32. This was done, not to avoid the appearance of a mutual arrangement, but for reasons of propriety, inasmuch as, in audiences granted by the king to his wife or one of his counselors, no third person ought to be present unless the king required his attendance.—*Keil.*

23. **They told the king**—Nathan came into the palace, not into the chamber, whither he might not enter unannounced.—*Canon Rawlinson.* **Come in before the king**—From the antechamber to the room of David. **Bowed himself to the ground**—The narrative here not only exhibits the vivid picture of a scene within the interior of a palace, but gives the im-

24 And Nathan said, My lord, O king, hast thou said, Ad-o-ni'jah shall reign after me, and he shall sit upon my throne ?

25 For he is gone down this day, and hath slain oxen and fat cattle and sheep

a Let king Adonijah live. 1 Sam. 19. 24; 2 Sam.

pression that a great deal of Oriental state ceremonial had been established in the Hebrew court.—*R. Jamieson.*

24. **Nathan said**—Nathan here, as always, (2 Sam. 7. 12,) appears right genuinely as prophet. When there is an attempt to bring to completion human self-willed beginnings over against the counsel and will of God, where the safety and well-being of the chosen people were at stake, then it was the calling of the prophet to interfere, counseling and reminding, warning and punishing. It was not so much personal friendship for David, and love for his pupil Solomon, as rather, and before all, the known will of Jehovah, which had determined that the latter should be king, that induced him to take the step which would have had the most disastrous consequences for himself, yea, might have cost him his life, had Adonijah become king.—*Bahr.* **Hast thou said**—Literally, "Thou hast said." In the original no question is asked. Nathan assumes, as far as the words go, that the king has made this declaration. He wishes to draw forth a disclaimer.—*Canon Rawlinson.* The indirect question is not merely an expression of modesty, but also of doubt, whether what had occurred had emanated from the king, and he had not shown it to his servants.—*Keil.*

25. **He has gone down this day**—To En-rogel, south of Jerusalem, in the valley of the Kedron. **Slain oxen and fat cattle**—The Orientals are fond of enjoying festive repasts in the open air, at places which command the advantage of shade, water, and verdure; and those *fêtes champêtres* are not cold collations, but magnificent entertainments, the animals being killed and dressed on the spot. Adonijah's feast at En-rogel was one of this Oriental description, and it was on a large scale. At the accession of a new king there were sacrifices offered, (1 Sam. 11. 15;) but, on such an occasion, it was no less customary to entertain the grandees of the kingdom, and even the populace, in a public manner. 1 Chron. 12. 23-40. There is the strongest probability that Adonijah's feast was purely political, to court popularity and secure a party to support his claim to the crown.—*R.*

in abundance, and hath called all the king's sons, and the captains of the host, and A-bi'a-thar the priest; and, behold, they eat and drink before him, and say, "God save king Ad-o-ni'jah.

26 But me, *even* me thy servant, and

16. 16; 2 Kings 11. 14; 2 Chron. 23. 11.

*Jamieson.* **Called all the king's sons**—From the number of David's wives and concubines we may infer a larger number of children than are named. These, with their several establishments, formed a princely party in the state, whose alliance Adonijah hoped to obtain against Solomon. Most of the conspiracies in Oriental history have arisen from the conflicting interests in the harem of the king. **Captains of the host**—The use of the plural here is very remarkable. It seems out of harmony with verses 7 and 19. Strictly speaking, too, there was but one "captain of the host," viz., Joab. 2 Sam. 8. 16; 20. 23. Nathan must here extend the term to officers of a rank below the highest. See 1 Chron. 25. 1.—*Canon Rawlinson.* The reasons for Joab's adherence to the plot are not difficult to ascertain. Throughout his entire history he had been too powerful for a subject to be pleasing to his king, though his loyalty was unquestioned. He had interfered in the government, was thoroughly unscrupulous, and represented the lower and worldly element of the empire. He now saw, in the distance, a new king, Solomon, arising, apart from his influence, belonging to the party of Nathan and the prophets, over whom he could exert no power, and whose peaceful policy would be contrary to his own warlike tastes, and give him no opportunity for control in the state. Because Adonijah represented the worldly element, as against the spiritual, Joab instinctively allied himself with him, as one whom he could dominate if he aided in his attempt to secure the throne. **Abiathar**—To many it seemed strange that this priest, the friend of David in his wanderings, should have countenanced such conspiracy. His action probably grew out of jealousy toward Zadok, his associate in office, who received so much favor from David.—*Terry.* **They eat and drink**—Thus also imitating Absalom, who, in order to cover his sin with the cloak of religion, and to ingratiate himself with those whom he invited to the banquet, began his rebellion with a sacrificial feast. 2 Sam. 15. 12.—*Wordsworth.* **God save king Adonijah**—This was the ordinary acclamation by which the Jews accepted a new king. See 1 Sam. 10. 24; 2 Sam. 16. 16; 2 Kings

Za'dok the priest, and Be-na'iah the son of Je-hoi'a-da, and thy servant Sol'o-mon, hath he not called.

27 Is this thing done by my lord the king, and thou hast not showed it unto thy servant, who should sit on the throne of my lord the king after him?

28 Then king Da'vid answered and said, Call me Bath-she'ba. And she

Before the king.—1 Judg. 8. 19; 1 Sam. 25. 34; 2 Sam. 4. 9; 103. 1, 4;

11. 12. Compare below verse 39.—*Canon Rawlinson.*

26, 27. **But me, even me**—Nathan, it was well known, might be counted among Solomon's staunch friends. He had given the infant prince the name of Jedediah, "darling of Jehovah." 2 Sam. 12. 25. He had perhaps been intrusted with his education. And, as privy to all David's plans, he had no doubt fully approved the order of succession which the king was known to intend.—*Canon Rawlinson.* **Zadok the priest**—There were now two high-priests, Abiathar, who had long been attached to David, and Zadok, whom Saul had anointed in the room of the slain Abimelech, and who was now at Gibeon, 1 Chron. 16. 39. It would have been imprudent for David to depose either of these, and therefore he wisely kept up the service of the tabernacle at Gibeon to afford Zadok the opportunity of exercising his office without interfering with Abiathar.—*M. S. Terry.* It is extremely probable that some cause of jealousy or discord between them had arisen, and hence each lent his countenance and support to opposite parties.—*R. Jamieson.* **Benaiah**—Distinguished for his bravery, (1 Sam. 23. 20,) he had been appointed captain of the king's body-guard, (2 Sam. 8. 18; 20. 23; 1 Chron. 18. 17,) and was regarded by Joab as a rival.—*R. Jamieson.* **Thy servant Solomon**—All the rest of the king's sons had been invited, but Solomon had been omitted, and the whole affair showed neither forgetfulness nor neglect, but premeditation to set aside the young prince who had been already indicated as the successor of David. **Hath he not called**—Nathan's words are any thing else than the expression of wounded vanity—they simply exhibit Adonijah's hostile sentiment toward the friend of the king, and also the fate in store for them should Adonijah become sovereign.—*Bahr.* **Thou hast not showed**—Nathan intimates that as the king's counselor and the Lord's prophet, he had some right to receive information if a change in the succession had been

came into the king's presence, and stood before the king.

29 And the king sware, and said, As the LORD liveth, that hath redeemed my soul out of all distress,

30 Even as I sware unto thee by the LORD God of Is'ra-el, saying, Assuredly Sol'o-mon thy son shall reign after me, and he shall sit upon my throne in my

12. 5.—2 Gen. 48. 16; Psa. 19. 14; 31. 5, 7; 34. 19, 22; 71. 23; Lam. 3. 58.

decided upon. The throne had been already promised to Solomon, as the chosen of the Lord.

The ministers of God and the preachers of his word should not indeed mingle in worldly business and political affairs, but their calling always requires them to testify against uproar and sedition, for he who resisteth the powers, resisteth the ordinance of God. Rom. 13. 2.—*Bahr.*

28. **Then king David answered**—The conduct of David when he learns what is going on corresponds fully with the Divine will and with his great calling as the founder of the theocratic kingdom, and of the new dynasty which is to sit forever upon the throne of Israel. He does not stagger irresolutely hither and thither, like a sick, feeble old man without any will of his own, but, as if he were still the strong hero, the undismayed, determined, energetic man, such as in his best years he had so often shown himself amid dangers and in critical situations, he raises himself from his sick-bed, swears to observe his word, issues his orders, and puts them into immediate execution.—*Bahr.* **Call me Bathsheba**—She had withdrawn from the king's presence at the entrance of Nathan, and, as we see from ver. 32, he in turn retired when she was re-admitted. This was done in accordance with the rules of court propriety, and also to avoid the appearance of mutual concert between them.—*Terry.*

29, 30. **The king sware**—"As the Lord liveth," was the commonest form of oath among the Israelites. **That hath redeemed my soul**—Many had been David's deliverances from danger, but there, as he re-affirms this oath before that woman with whom, and for whose sake, he had perpetrated the darkest sins of his life, we should understand a special allusion to the bitter soul-agonies which resulted from those crimes; for it was at the time of his redemption and deliverance from those agonies that Jehovah had foretold to him the birth and destiny of Solomon. 2 Sam. 12.—*Terry.* **Assuredly Solomon my son**—We know nothing

stead; even so will I certainly do this day.

31 Then Bath-she'ba bowed with *her* face to the earth, and did reverence to the king, and said, Let <sup>2</sup>my lord king Da'vid live for ever.

32 And king Da'vid said, Call me Za'dok the priest, and Na'than the prophet, and Be-na'iah the son of Jehoi'a-da. And they came before the king.

<sup>2</sup> Neh. 2, 3; Dan. 2, 4. — <sup>4</sup> 2 Sam. 20, 6. — <sup>c</sup> Which belongeth 2 Sam. 7, 4; 5, 3; chap. 19, 16; 2 Kings 9, 3;

more of the circumstance of this oath than is recorded in the present chapter.—*Canon Rawlinson.*

31. **Bathsheba bowed with her face to the earth**—A lower and humbler obeisance than even her previous one. Ver. 16. In the Assyrian sculptures ambassadors are represented with their faces actually touching the earth before the feet of the monarch. **Let king David live forever**—This form of compliment has always prevailed in the East. See Dan. 2, 4; 3, 9; 5, 10; 6, 21; Neh. 2, 3.—*Canon Rawlinson.*

32. **Call me Zadok . . . Nathan . . . Benaiah**—The combination of the high-priest, the prophet, and the captain of the body-guard would show the people that the proceedings had the king's sanction. The order of the names marks the position of the persons with respect to the matter in hand.—*Canon Rawlinson.*

33. **The servants of your Lord**.—The Cherethites and Pelethites, who formed the royal body-guard. (See verse 38.) It is probable that these were not Israelites, but foreigners of Philistian or other races, who were employed as guards to the palace; as most Oriental rulers are surrounded by mercenary or hired soldiers, on whose fidelity they can depend better than on their own people. Nearly all the kings of Europe have obtained their guards from among the Swiss, and it will be remembered how bravely the Swiss guard of Louis XVI., of France, defended their unfortunate master. **Solomon . . . to ride upon mine own mule**—Mules and horses seem to have been first employed by the Israelites in the reign of David. Apparently the use of the former was at first confined to great personages. 2 Sam. 13, 29; 18, 9. The rabbis tell us that it was death to ride on the king's mule without his permission; and thus it would be the more evident to all that the proceedings with respect to Solomon had David's sanction. It was probably with this object, and not merely to do Solomon

33 The king also said unto them, Take <sup>4</sup>with you the servants of your lord, and cause Sol'o-mon my son to ride upon <sup>c</sup>mine own mule, and bring him down <sup>6</sup>to Gi'hon.

34 And let Za'dok the priest and Na'than the prophet <sup>e</sup>anoint him there king over Is'ra-el: and <sup>7</sup>blow ye with the trumpet, and say, God save king Sol'o-mon.

to me. Esth. 6, 8. — <sup>5</sup> 2 Chron. 32, 30. — <sup>6</sup> 1 Sam. 10, 1; 16, 3, 12; 11, 12. — <sup>7</sup> 2 Sam. 15, 10; 2 Kings 9, 13; 11, 14.

honor, (compare the case of Mordecai, Esth. 6, 8,) that he was thus mounted.—*Canon Rawlinson.* **Gi'hon**—A reservoir at the head of the valley of Hinnom, about seven hundred yards north-west of the Yaffa gate of Jerusalem. Its length from east to west is about three hundred feet; its breadth about two hundred.—*Terry.* *Canon Rawlinson* gives it a location in the Tyropæon valley, between the hill of Moriah and the one now known as Zion. *Corder* regards it as En-rogel, in the Kedron, 100 yards from the stone Zohleth, where Adonijah's friends were feasting, but that seems scarcely probable. We incline to Dr. *Terry's* location on the west of Jerusalem.

34. **Zadok . . . and Nathan**—It is significant that the anointing was performed by the two men representing the priestly and prophetic orders, thus united around the new throne; and that Benaiah as the commander of the military forces, though himself a priest by birth, had no part in the service. Solomon was in no sense to owe his crown to force of arms. **Anoint him**—Inauguration into each of the three offices typical of the Messiah, or Anointed One, was by anointing with oil. Divine appointment had instituted the rite in connection with the kingly office, first in the case of Saul, (1 Sam. 9, 16; 10, 1,) and then in that of David, (1 Sam. 16, 1-12,) who was anointed three several times. 1 Sam. 16, 13; 2 Sam. 2, 4; 5, 3. It is doubted whether the rite continued to be used in the kingdoms of Israel and Judah in ordinary cases, or only when the succession was in dispute or irregular.—*Canon Rawlinson.* The rabbis relate the tradition that the three kings of all Israel and the kings of Judah were anointed from the flask of oil prepared by Moses in the wilderness; and that its last drops were exhausted upon the head of Josiah, so that after him the successive kings were not anointed. **Blow ye with the trumpet**—Trumpets had been used by Absalom when he made himself king, 2 Sam. 15, 10. They are again mentioned at the proclamation of

35 Then ye shall come up after him, that he may come and sit upon my throne; for he shall be king in my

Jehu, (2 Kings 9. 13,) and of Joash. 2 Kings 11. 14.—*Canon Rawlinson.*

**35. Come up after him**—To the palace on Mount Zion. **Sit upon my throne**—Solomon's reign is to be regarded as a *continuation* of the reign of David, his father. David's reign did not end with David's life, but it flowed on in the life of Solomon, his son, for which it was a preparation. Thus the union of David and Solomon, as forming by their conjunction a typical representation of *Christ*, the king of the spiritual Zion, as a conqueror like David, and yet as the prince of peace like Solomon, is made more manifest.—*Terry.* **I have appointed him**—David made the appointment as the representative of God over the nation. **Over Israel and over Judah**—This expression is but one of many indications that, through all the history, the bond of union between Judah and the other tribes was but slight; and that the Judahites, on the one hand, and the Ephraimites, on the other, represented two opposite forces in the Confederation of Israel. David risked his popularity in his own tribe of Judah in the vain endeavor to unite all the tribes, and under Solomon's successor the two diverse elements at once fell apart, forever to remain separated.

Adonijah's undertaking, in which there is so unmistakably a reference to Absalom's, is to be understood throughout as blameworthy. He knew that the decision upon the succession to the throne depended upon his father, and that he had already selected Solomon. He knew also the tragical end of Absalom's attempt. Nevertheless, he would not be warned by it, but set himself up in the way of self over-estimation, making boast of his beautiful figure. King will he be at any cost. He makes his preparations without his father's consent, takes advantage of his infirmity and weakness, and secretly enters into combinations with the most influential men who belonged, more or less, to the class of malcontents. He allows himself to become impatient through his lust for ruling, and to rush into a measure in every respect premature. Upon the first intelligence, nevertheless, of Solomon's accession, a shameful panic seizes him. All courage to risk the least thing for his cause fails him. The whole crowd of his followers scatter like dust, and he himself,

stead: and I have appointed him to be ruler over Is'ra-el and over Ju'dah.

in a cowardly way, seeks to save only his life. He anxiously flies to a place of refuge, clings to it, calls himself Solomon's "servant," and salutes him as king. But, scarcely is the danger past, than he breaks his pledged word to behave quietly, and starts anew in secret machinations to reach his goal. He flatters the mother of Solomon with hypocritical humility, and seeks to move the heart of the wife. Rightly does Ewald say of him: "A man who, according to all the known features of our memorial of him, has much that resembles Absalom. fine form, airy, and ambitious of power, yet inwardly scarcely fit for governing; of an obdurate mind, and yet afraid to venture upon open battle. That he was no proper sovereign for such a kingdom as Israel then was, must be obvious to intelligent men."—*Bahr.*

#### Authorities to be Consulted.

Stanley's Jewish Church, lecture 26. Milman's History of the Jews, vol. i, book vii. F. D. Maurice's Prophets and Kings, sermon v. Bishop Hall's Contemplations, book xvii, cont. 1. Geikie's Hours with the Bible, vol. iii, chap. 13. Kitto's Daily Bible Illustrations, 29th week.

#### Practical Thoughts.

##### [THE KINGDOM OF GOD.]

1. The kingdom of God on the earth receives the support of those who, like the prophet, are in fellowship with God and receive his word. Ver. 22-26.
2. The kingdom of God is opposed by the baser and more worldly elements of society, those having carnal interests to serve. Ver. 25.
3. The kingdom of God is under the direct care of the Almighty, and the subject of his gracious promise. Ver. 30.
4. The kingdom of God requires for its establishment and supremacy all the energy of man under the direction of the Spirit. Ver. 32.
5. The kingdom of God presents the two aspects of religion in harmony, the priest and the prophet representing the external and spiritual elements united. Ver. 34.
6. The kingdom of God brings sudden confusion to the schemes of self-seeking men.
7. The kingdom of God ushers in an era of peace and prosperity. Ver. 35.



## B. C. 1015.]

## LESSON II.

[Oct. 12.]

## DAVID'S CHARGE TO SOLOMON.—1 Chron. 22. 6-19.

**GOLDEN TEXT.**—Arise, therefore, and be doing, and the Lord be with thee.—1 CHRON. 22. 16.

TIME.—B.C. 1015.

CONNECTING LINK David's preparations for building the temple. 1 Chron. 22. 1-5.

**INTRODUCTION.**—*The Books of the Chronicles.* The thirteenth and fourteenth books of the Old Testament, which, among the ancient Jews, formed only one book, are called the *First* and *Second Book of Chronicles*, and are in some sense supplemental to the two books of Kings which precede them, with this difference, that the Chronicles are written from the sacerdotal point of view, and present chiefly the fortunes of Jewish worship; while the Kings are written from the prophetic view of the history of the theocracy. They appear to have been compiled from the national diaries or journals, and the constant Jewish tradition, which internal evidence supports, is that they were written by Ezra. *Schaff*. This portion of the Old Testament may be considered as an epitome of all the sacred history, but more especially of that from the origin of the Jewish nation to their return from the first captivity, embracing a period of nearly 3,500 years. The first book traces the rise and propagation of the children of Israel from Adam, together with a circumstantial account of the reign and transactions of David; the second continues the narrative, and relates the progress and dissolution of the Kingdom of Judea (apart from Israel) to the year of the return of the people from Babylon.—*Schaff*. *David's Preparation for the Temple.*—With this chapter commences the second section of the history of David's kingship, viz., the account of the preparations, dispositions, and arrangements which he made in the last years of his reign for the establishment of his kingdom, in the future, under his successors. All these preparations and dispositions had reference to the firm establishment of the public worship of the Lord, in which Israel, as the people and congregation of Jehovah, might show its faithfulness to the covenant, so as to become partakers of the divine protection and the blessing which was promised. To build the Temple—this desire the Lord had not indeed granted the fulfillment of to David, but he had given him the promise that his son should carry out that work. The gray-haired king accordingly made preparations, after the site of the house of God which should be built had been pointed out to him, such as would facilitate the execution of the work by his successor. Of these preparations our chapter treats, and in it we have an account how David provided the necessary labor and materials for the building of the Temple, (verses 2-5.) committed the execution of the work, in a solemn way, to his son Solomon, (verses 6-16,) and called upon the chiefs of the people to give him their support in the work. (Verses 17-19.)—*Kcil*.

6 Then he called for Sol'o-mon his son, and charged him to build an house for the LORD God of Is'ra-el.

7 And Da'vid said to Sol'o-mon, My son, as for me, <sup>1</sup>it was in my mind to

build an house <sup>2</sup>unto the name of the LORD my God:

8 But the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, <sup>3</sup>Thou hast shed blood abundantly, and hast made great wars: thou

<sup>1</sup> 2 Sam. 7. 2; 1 Kings 8. 17; chap. 17. 1; 2s. 2; Acts 7. 46.

<sup>2</sup> Deut. 12. 5.—<sup>3</sup> 1 Kings 5. 3; chap. 28. 3.

6. Then—This was in the old age of David, after Solomon's coronation. Called for Solomon—Solomon was one of David's youngest sons, the child of Bathsheba, born after David's forgiveness. Charged him—David's charge to Solomon, here recorded, belongs to the same period as that of 1 Kings 2. 1-10. One passage supplements the other, and the contrast between them is very noticeable. The writer of Kings was concerned more particularly with the political history of David, and records the aged king's counsel to his son in reference to dangerous political enemies; the chronicler omits all that, and records only the charge of David respecting the building of the temple.—*Terry*.

7, 8. It was in my mind—See notes on 17

Lesson III, Third Quarter. But the word of the Lord came to me—The reference here is clearly not to the message of Nathan, (chap. 17. 4-15,) which assigns no ground for the prohibition laid on David, but to some other occasion on which God had intimated to him, not only his will, but the reason for it.—*Canon Rawlinson*. Hast made great wars—The wars of David were not carried on against God's will. In many cases they were expressly ordered by Jehovah, and often called the "Wars of the Lord." In order to the establishment of Israel in Canaan, wars and bloodshed were unavoidable. Nevertheless, the bloodshed and barbarity of war were not in harmony with the profound symbolism of peace, sabbatic quiet, and thoughtful re-

shalt not build an house unto my name, because thou hast shed much blood upon the earth in my sight.

9 Behold, <sup>4</sup> a son shall be born to thee, who shall be a man of rest; and I will give him <sup>5</sup> rest from all his enemies round about: for his name shall be <sup>6</sup> Solomon, and I will give peace and quietness unto Is'ra-el in his days.

10 He <sup>6</sup> shall build an house for my name; and <sup>7</sup> he shall be my son, and I

will be his father; and I will establish the throne of his kingdom over Is'ra-el for ever.

11 Now, my son, the <sup>8</sup> LORD be with thee; and prosper thou, and build the house of the LORD thy God, as he hath said of thee.

12 Only the LORD <sup>9</sup> give thee wisdom and understanding, and give thee charge concerning Is'ra-el, that thou mayest keep the law of the LORD thy God.

<sup>4</sup> Chap. 28. 5.—<sup>5</sup> 1 Kings 4. 25; 5. 4.—<sup>6</sup> That is, Peaceable and  
<sup>7</sup> Psa. 89. 26, 27; Heb. 1. 5.—<sup>8</sup> Rom. 8. 31.—

perfect.—<sup>9</sup> 2 Sam. 7. 13, 1 Kings 5. 5; chap. 17. 12; 28. 6.—  
<sup>10</sup> Deut. 4. 6; 1 Kings 3. 9; Psa. 72. 1.

pose, which were to be embodied in the house of Jehovah.—*Terry*. In my sight—Which I have taken particular notice of. And this expression may possibly be added in reference to Uriah and the rest of the Israelites, who were slain at the siege of Rabbah by David's contrivance; which peradventure David had in his eye, (Psa. 51. 4,) where David, confessing this sin, useth this very expression, *I have done this evil in thy sight.*—*Pool*.

9. A son shall be born to thee—Rather "a son is born to thee." The prophecy was delivered to David after Solomon's birth, not before.—*Canon Rawlinson*. Who shall be a man of rest—Not a man who makes rest, (Jer. 51. 59,) but, as the sequel shows, a man who enjoys rest, who has the blessings of peace, and therefore rightly bears his name.—*Zockler*. His name shall be Solomon—The Hebrew form of the name is *Shelomoh*, peaceable. Compare Shelomith. 1 Chron. 3. 19. This name was, doubtless, given to him at his circumcision. Compare Luke 1. 59; 2. 20.—*Bishop Ilvey*. I will give peace—Solomon inherited from David the peaceful possession of all the lands from the border of Egypt to the Euphrates, which David had conquered, including the provinces of Edom, Moab, and Syria, besides the free control of the portion of Israel occupied by the Philistines and the Canaanites. We read of no wars during the forty years of Solomon's reign.

10. He shall be my son—For David's sake Solomon should be received into a peculiar relationship of guardianship and care. It does not mean that his personal adoption as a child of God was secured by the covenant with David, irrespective of Solomon's own character. As king of Israel he was under God's care, but as a subject of redemption he stood or fell by his own choice. I will be his father—While the prayers of parents cannot secure the certain salvation of their children, the care of parents

can give them the privileges of God's covenant. I will establish the throne of his kingdom—This is not meant of Solomon, for his kingdom was not forever. And though the phrase forever is sometimes used of the time of a man's life, yet it cannot be so understood here, because the mercy here promised to David's son is of another nature, and of far longer continuance, than that which was given to Saul, (verse 15,) who yet enjoyed the kingdom as long as he lived. But it is to be understood of David's posterity in general, but with special respect to Christ, in whose person the kingdom was to be lodged forever. Isa. 9. 7; Dan. 2. 44; Luke 1. 32, 33.—*Pool*.

11, 12. The Lord be with thee—True prosperity can only be possessed by those who enjoy the presence of the Lord. Prosper thou—Go on prosperously in carrying on this work; or, the Lord give thee that rest and prosperity which is necessary for it.—*Pool*. Wisdom and understanding—Wisdom is the knowledge of truth and righteousness, and understanding is the practical tact or discretion in the conduct of affairs, such as was needed in the vast responsibilities laid upon the young king. Give thee charge concerning Israel—That is, give thee instructions or directions rightly to manage and rule his people Israel. Or, and set thee over Israel, as the Syriac renders it, which the Arabic follows, or, when (as the Hebrew *vau* is often used) *he shall set thee over Israel*, that is, when thou shalt be king; for then Solomon would need this wisdom, for which therefore he prayeth. 1 Kings 3. 9.—*Pool*. That thou mayest keep—The true secret of prosperity in any enterprise, great or small, lies in obedience to the divine commands. This lesson we may learn, not only from the history of Joshua, but from that of Joseph; from that of Moses; from that of Saul; from that of Uzziah; and from that of Hezekiah; nay, it is the great lesson which runs

13 Then shalt thou prosper, if thou takest heed to fulfil the statutes and judgments which the Lord charged Moses with concerning Israel: be strong, and of good courage; dread not, nor be dismayed.

14 Now, behold, in my trouble I have prepared for the house of the Lord an hundred thousand talents of gold, and

<sup>10</sup> Josh. 1. 7; chap. 28. 7; Isa. 3. 10. — <sup>11</sup> Deut. 31. 7; chap. 28.

through the pages of inspiration, and which is enforced by universal observation and experience.—*T. Smith.* The law of the Lord—There was a written law at that time, comprehending the essential parts of the Books of Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy, though, probably, its final revision had not yet been made. But "the law" included not only these documents, but the general current of inspired teaching as delivered through the prophets, as representatives of Jehovah.

13. Then shalt thou prosper—The original word rendered "prosper" may mean to act wisely, and inasmuch as wisdom brings prosperity, it also means to prosper. Many scholars understand it here in the first sense, "to act wisely." The strongest temptation to deviate from the commands of God is presented by pleas of expediency and policy. God would teach that these pleas are always foolish, and that not only duty, but also wisdom, is always manifested in a strict obedience to the divine law.—*F. Johnson.* Be strong and of a good courage—Better, *Be strong and firm.* Michaelis remarks that the verb "to be strong" denotes strength of hand and arm to lay hold of and retain any thing within one's grasp; while "to be firm" denotes rather firmness in the knees, and ability to maintain one's position against the attack of foes.—*D. Steele.*

14. In my trouble I have prepared for the house—Margin, *in my poverty.* So also Septuagint and Vulgate. Bertheau and Keil, *by my painful labor*; that is, by great toil and effort on my part. The word thus variously rendered generally means affliction, distress; and such is, probably, the sense in which it should here be taken. David means to say that under varied circumstances of trouble, warfare, and distress, he had accumulated the treasures he here enumerates.—*Terry.* The quantities of silver and gold which David had collected for the building of the temple had not been saved out of his yearly income, but had been in great part

a thousand thousand talents of silver; and of brass and iron without weight; for it is in abundance; timber also and stone have I prepared; and thou mayest add thereto.

15 Moreover there are workmen with thee in abundance, hewers and workers of stone and timber, and all manner of cunning men for every manner of work.

<sup>20</sup>—*Or, in my poverty.*—*c* That is, masons and carpenters.

captured as booty in war, and laid up out of the tribute of the subject peoples.—*Keil.* A hundred thousand talents of gold—About \$5,630,000,000. A thousand thousand talents of silver—About \$1,660,000,000. These numbers are incredibly large, and unless the value of the talent in question was vastly less than that at which the Hebrew talent is commonly estimated, the statement of the text is probably extravagant.—*Terry.* The statements are not founded upon any exact calculation or weighing, but, as the round numbers show, only upon a general valuation of those masses of the precious metals, which we must not think of as bars of silver and gold, or as coined money; for they were in great part vessels of gold and silver, partly booty captured in war, partly tribute derived from the subject peoples.—*Keil.* Timber and stone—Beams of timber also, and stones—that is, stones hewed and squared—David had prepared; and to this store Solomon was to add. That he did so is warranted in 2 Chron., chap. 2.—*Keil.*

Cyrus obtained by the conquest of Asia a booty of 34,000 pounds of gold, besides that which was wrought into vessels and ornaments, and 500,000 talents of silver; and in this statement, as Movers rightly remarks, it does not seem probable that there is any exaggeration. In Susa, Alexander plundered the royal treasury of 40,000, according to other accounts 50,000, talents, or, as it is more accurately stated, 40,000 talents of uncoined gold and silver, and 9,000 talents in coined daries. These he caused to be brought to Ecbatana, where he accumulated in all 180,000 talents. In Persepolis he captured a booty of 120,000 talents, and in Pasargada 6,000 talents.—*Keil.*

15. There are workmen—Some of these were, perhaps, laborers from the conquered Canaanites and other subjugated people, as it was customary to enslave captives taken in war. Others were skilled artisans from Phenicia, which furnished the architect for the temple. No number—The amount of metal prepared was too vast for enumeration.

16 Of the gold, the silver, and the brass, and the iron, *there is no number. Arise therefore, and be doing, and the LORD be with thee.*

17 Da'vid also commanded all the princes of Is'ra-el to help Sol'o-mon his son, *saying,*

18 *Is not the LORD your God with you? and hath he not given you rest on every side? for he hath given the inhab-*

itants of the land into mine hand; and the land is subdued before the LORD, and before his people.

19 Now<sup>13</sup> set your heart and your soul to seek the LORD your God: arise therefore, and build ye the sanctuary of the LORD God,<sup>14</sup> to bring the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and the holy vessels of God, into the house that is to be built to the name of the LORD.

<sup>12</sup> Deut. 12. 10; Josh. 22. 4; 2 Sam. 7. 1; chap. 23. 25.

<sup>13</sup> 2 Chron. 20. 3.-<sup>14</sup> 1 Kings 8. 6; 2 Chron. 5. 7; 6. 11.

17, 18. The princes of Israel—The heads of the several tribes, by hereditary position, and the nobles of the court established by David. We notice that the court of David was much more stately and magnificent than that of Saul. **Given you rest**—This safety, which the Lord had granted them, binds them in duty to seek him with all their heart, and to build the sanctuary, that the ark and the sacred vessels may be brought into it.—*Kil.* **The inhabitants of the land**—The subdued land is Canaan; the inhabitants of the land are, however, not the Israelites, over whom the Lord had set David as king, for the words cannot apply to them, (*cf.* 14. 10*f.*; Josh. 2. 24;) it is the Canaanites still left in the land in the time of David, and other enemies, who, like the Philistines, possessed parts of the land, and had been subdued by David.—*Kil.*

19. **The sanctuary**—The holy house; made holy by the presence of the Lord. **The ark**—See note, Third Quarter, Lesson II, verse 2. **The holy vessels of God**—That is, the pot of manna, the golden candlestick, the snuffers and snuff-dishes, the censers, etc., which belonged to the old worship of the tabernacle.—*Canon Rawlinson*

A question which would readily occur is, Whether such enormous sums were actually necessary for the temple? But the materials necessary to enable us to arrive at even a proximate estimate of this building are entirely wanting. The building of a stone temple, from 60 to 70 yards long, 20 yards broad, and 30 yards high, would certainly not have cost so much, notwithstanding that, as we read in 2 Chron. 3. 8*f.*, 650 talents of gold were required to gild the inner walls of the holy place, and, at the same rate, 2,000 talents must have been required to gild the inside of the sanctuary, which was three times as large; and notwithstanding the great number of massive gold vessels, *c. g.*, the ten golden candlesticks, for which alone, even if they were no larger and heavier than the candlesticks in the tabernacle, ten talents of gold must have been required. But there

belonged to the temple many subordinate buildings, which are not further described, as also the colossal foundation structures and the wall inclosing the temple area, the building of which must have swallowed up millions, since Solomon sent 70,000 porters and 80,000 stone-hewers to Lebanon to procure the necessary materials. Finally, we must have regard to the statement, in 1 Kings 7. 51, and 2 Chron. 5. 1, that Solomon, after the building was finished, deposited the consecrated silver and gold collected by his father David among the temple treasures. Whence we learn that the treasures collected by David were not intended merely for the building of the House of God.—*Kil.*

#### Authorities to be Consulted.

Stanley's Jewish Church, lecture 27. Geikie's Hours with the Bible, vol. iii, chap. 16. Milman's History of the Jews, vol. i, book 7. Freeman's Bible Manners and Customs, No. 295. Foster's Cyclopaedia of Illustrations, [numbers marked with a star refer to poetical quotations,] vers. 7-11: \*4046; 13: 7579; 19: \*291.

#### Practical Thoughts.

##### [THE NEEDS OF GOD'S HOUSE.]

1. The building of God's spiritual house, as well of his material temple, requires a heart full of interest and forethought for God's cause. Vers. 6, 7.
2. The building of God's house must be preceded by a period of labor and strife which unfits the worker for the requirements of peaceful service. Ver. 8.
3. The building of God's house requires a season of quiet and peace, freed from worldly entanglements. Ver. 9.
4. The builder of God's house should be one in covenant fellowship with the Lord, and adopted as God's own. Ver. 10.
5. The building of God's house requires wisdom, and breadth of views, and skill in public affairs. Ver. 12.
6. The building of God's house requires a

heart of obedience to God, and fidelity to his cause. Ver. 13.

7. The building of God's house requires the consecration of property, and its surrender to the cause of God. Ver. 14.

**Sermon Outline.**

BY REV. J. S. CHADWICK, D.D.

**I. Consider the sublime object here contemplated—building the house of the Lord.**

1. *It was to be erected according to divine command.* It was not of human devising. It was to be constructed upon a divine plan—built according to the wisdom and skill of God. So believers in the Lord Jesus Christ are to be builded together into a glorious, spiritual temple, according to the divine command.

2. *It was to be constructed of the costliest materials.* Herein we may see shadowed forth: the preciousness of believers—intellectual, thinking, immortal spirits—the true and only materials of which our Lord's spiritual Church is composed. They are blood-bought, prized of God, and assured of eternal blessedness. To estimate their worth is beyond an angel's power.

3. *It was to be erected for the grandest design conceivable.*

(1) *The manifestation of Jehovah's glory.* He filled the temple with the cloud of his presence, the symbol of his glory. Here God's revelation of himself to his people was sensible and general, but, in the Christian Church, it is spiritual and particular. Conspicuous as was the divine glory in the ancient temple, the glory of the Christian Church is greater, because in the latter there is manifestation of the Incarnate Deity.

(2) *The temple service was designed to instruct and bless Israel.* It was the meeting-place between Jehovah and his chosen people. Here they were to be exalted to the enjoyment of the highest and holiest exercises. The temple worship, however, was exclusive; now every church dedicated to the service of Almighty God is the place where, in a special sense, he is pleased to meet his people. The world-wide diffusiveness of the Christian religion contrasts favorably and beautifully with the ancient, but restricted, faith.

**II. Consider the nature of the obligations imposed in David's charge.**

1. *Solomon was chosen of God to lead in the construction of the temple.* The pressure of responsibility was upon him. God selects individuals still to do special work for him in his Church.

2. *He was enjoined to heed the revealed will of God, in all things.* Prosperity was conditioned upon this. We should be solicitous to please the Almighty One. Nothing should dissuade us from entering upon Christian work, or hinder us from prosecuting it.

3. *He was expected to be of a courageous spirit.* Difficulties and discouragements may arise; you may encounter opposition; but, fear not, God helps.

4. *The people were entreated to strengthen his hands by their united, loving service.* So, in the Church to-day, all must render help by establishing Christ's kingdom. Each has his work to do.

**III. We should be impressed by David's charge with the spirit in which God's work should be prosecuted.**

1. *Remembering past mercies and blessings.* God had given many enemies into David's hands. The people now had rest. Solomon should remember what God had done. We have had spiritual victories and divine favors. In memory of the past be stimulated to greater achievements.

2. *In the spirit of earnest consecration.* "Set your heart and soul to seek the Lord."

3. *With joy and gladness, because of the Divine Presence.* "And the Lord be with thee."

4. *In hope, because of the good that shall come to others.* Think of the salvation that shall go forth from Zion, and of the multitudes yet to be blessed through your efforts.

**DEDUCTIONS:**

1. Act promptly upon the counsels of godly parents.

2. The plans and purposes of good men are sometimes checked by providential interference.

3. Consider the great honor put upon man, in being called into the service of the living God.

4. All should be engaged in building for God a spiritual temple, and, by the worship of earth, prepare for that world wherein is no temple.

Jehovah." The law had commanded that sacrifices should be offered only at the door of the tabernacle, and the tribes had been required to destroy "the places on the high mountains" consecrated to idolatry, but both injunctions had long been disregarded, from necessity or the force of ancient custom. Gideon and Manoah had both built altars on such spots; Samuel had repeatedly done so, and David had sacrificed on the threshing-floor of Ornan at the top of Mount Moriah. The instinctive feeling that hill-tops are most suitable for worship, as nearer heaven, and raised above the din and disturbance of the world, yielded, indeed, only slowly before the heathen abuses to which they had been devoted. It was, therefore, in accordance with ancient practice that Solomon betook himself to the lofty summit, now known by the name of El-Jib, the modern form of Gibeon, about six miles north of Jerusalem which, with the whole country far and near, is seen from its top, spread out in a wide panorama. Hither, or to the twin hill immediately south, but so close to the ancient town of Gibeon as to be all but a part of it, Solomon determined to make a solemn progress. The ancient tabernacle, a sacred memorial of Sinai and the wilderness, stood, as a venerated relic, on its height, behind the great brazen altar, made by Bezaleel under the shadow of the Holy Mount more than five hundred years before. A staff of priests had been appointed by David to offer the daily sacrifices and fulfill the other requirements of the law. Zadok, the high-priest, was at their head, assisted by the famous magicians, Heman and Jeduthun. True to his passion for magnificence, afterward so fatally developed, the young king set forth from Jerusalem in high state, accompanied by the chiefs of thousands and of hundreds, the judges, governors, and heads of the fathers, who had been summoned from all Israel to attend him. His object was noble, for he wished to inaugurate his whole reign by a public religious service. But the outward form of the worship offered shows already a decline from the high spirituality of David to an exaggerated ritualism, which in itself had no moral significance. Less than a thousand burnt-offerings were held insufficient, and hence the sacrifices must have lasted for many days, the clang of trumpets and cymbals and the exulting strains of "musical instruments of God" resounding ever and anon, far and near, as the king and the vast multitude of the great of the land knelt in worship. It was at this time that the first of three recorded visions of God to Solomon took place.—*C. Geikie.*

5 In <sup>1</sup> Gib'e-on the LORD appeared to Sol'o-mon <sup>2</sup> in a dream by night: and God said, Ask <sup>3</sup> what I shall give thee.

6 And <sup>4</sup> Sol'o-mon said, Thou hast showed unto thy servant Da'vid my father great <sup>5</sup> mercy according as he

<sup>1</sup> Chap. 9. 2; <sup>2</sup> Chron. 1. 3.—<sup>3</sup> Num. 12. 6, Matt. 1. 20, 2. 13.

5. In Gibeon—The name signifies "pertaining to a hill," that is, built on a hill, (*cf.* Gibeah and Geba, towns in the neighborhood,) and describes the site, which is on two rounded hills peculiar to this district. It is still known as *El-Jib*, and stands at the head of the pass of Beth-horon, through which lies the main route from Jerusalem and the lower Jordan valley to Joppa and the sea-coast. **The Lord appeared to Solomon**—Solomon felt an intense desire, and he had offered an earnest petition, for the gift of wisdom. In sleep his thoughts ran upon the subject of his prayer, and he dreamed that God appeared to him and gave him the option of every thing in the world; that he asked wisdom, and that God granted his request. His dream was but an imaginary repetition of his former desire, but God's grant of it was real.—*R. Jamieson.* **In a dream by night**—This was one mode of divine revelation. In such cases the soul was raised to a state of divine ecstasy and illumination, and held conscious intercourse with God or angels; but when the natural, waking consciousness returned, the person knew it was

walked before thee in truth, and in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart with thee; and thou hast kept for him this great kindness, that thou hast given him a son to sit on his throne, as *it is* this day.

<sup>3</sup> John 15. 7.—<sup>4</sup> 2 Chron. 1. 8.—*a Or, bounty.*

a dream.—*Terry.* **Ask what shall I give thee**—God well knew what Solomon needed, but he bid him ask (1) to show how negligent men are in praying for what is spiritual; (2) that he would only bestow his gifts in the ordinance of prayer; (3) that great personages might have an example of what they should ask of God above all others.—*Starke.*

Solomon worships God by day; God appears to Solomon by night. Well may we look to enjoy God when we have served him; the night cannot but be happy whose day hath been holy.—*Bishop Hall.*

6. **Unto thy servant David . . . great mercy**—It is not his own merit which gives him courage for this prayer, but he rests it upon the divine grace and mercy which his father had so richly experienced. His words are not many, but the few he utters are the expression of a living, child-like faith, as simple and substantial as it is inward and true.—*Bahr.* **In truth**—Either, first, sincerely and without dissimulation. But that is more fully expressed in the following words, *In uprightness of heart.* Or rather,

7 And now, O LORD my God, thou hast made thy servant king instead of Da'vid my father, <sup>6</sup> and I *am but* a little child: I know not *how* <sup>7</sup> to go out or come in.

\* 1 Chron. 29. 1. — 6 Num. 27. 17. — 7 Deut. 7. 6. — 8 Genesis — 6 He

8 And thy servant *is* in the midst of thy people which thou <sup>7</sup> hast chosen, a great people, <sup>8</sup> that cannot be numbered nor counted for multitude.

9 Give <sup>9</sup> therefore thy servant an *un-*

derstanding heart. — 10 1 Kings 13. 16; 15. 5. — 9 2 Chron. 1. 19; Proverbs 2. 3; James 1. 5. — 10 aring.

secondly, in the true worship and service of God, in the profession, belief, practice, and defense of the truth, or of the true religion, or of God's will or word, which is called *truth*. Prov. 23. 23; John 17. 17; Gal. 3. 1. So *truth* here contains all his duties to God, as *righteousness* doth his duties to men, and *uprightness* the right manner of performing both sorts of duties. **Uprightness of heart with thee**—That is, in thy judgment, to whom alone his heart was known, and to whom he oft appealed as the witness of his integrity; and with respect to whom he performed all his duties, even to men. **Thou hast kept, or reserved** that which thou didst not reserve for Saul, whose posterity thou didst cut off from the kingdom.—*Psal.* This great kindness—David himself had regarded this as God's crowning mercy to him. 1 Kings 1. 48.—*Canon Rawlinson.*

Children should give God thanks for his mercies to their parents, for the sure mercies of David. God's favors are then doubly sweet, when we observe them transmitted to us through the hands of those that have gone before us. The way to get the entail perpetuated is to bless God that it has hitherto been preserved.—*M. Henry.*

7. **Thou hast made thy servant king**—An acknowledged fulfillment of God's promise to Abraham. Gen. 13. 16. Solomon feels that he has been made king of the covenant people.—*Terry.* **I am but a little child**—Solomon's youth clearly constituted one of the chief difficulties of his position. His exact age at his accession is uncertain. According to Josephus he was just fourteen; but this may be no more than a deduction from David's words, "Solomon, my son, is young and tender," (1 Chron. 22. 5; 29. 1,) and from Solomon's own declaration, (1 Kings 3. 7,) "I am but a little child." Moderns generally have supposed that he was about twenty, which is probably an over, rather than an under, estimate. For a youth of nineteen or twenty, known to be of a pacific disposition, (1 Chron. 32. 9,) to have to rule over the warlike and turbulent Hebrew nation, with a strong party opposed to him, and brothers of full age ready to lead it, was evidently a most difficult task.—*Canon Rawlinson.* **To go out or come**

**in**—An idiomatic expression, denoting the whole official conduct of a ruler before his people.—*Terry.*

Those who are employed in public stations ought to be very sensible of the weight and importance of their work, and their own insufficiency for it; and then they are qualified for receiving divine instruction. Paul's question (*Who is sufficient for these things?*) is much like Solomon's here, *Who is able to judge this thy so great a people?* Ver. 9. Absalom, who was a fool, wished himself a judge; Solomon, who was a wise man, trembles at the undertaking, and suspects his own fitness for it. The more knowing and considerate men are the better acquainted they are with their own weakness, and the more jealous of themselves.—*M. Henry.*

8. **Is in the midst of thy people**—That is, is set over them to rule and guide them: a metaphor from the overseer of divers workmen, who usually is in the midst of them, that he may the better observe how each of them discharge his office.—*Psal.* **Which thou hast chosen**—Thy peculiar people, whom thou takest special care of, and therefore wilt expect a more punctual account of my government of them.—*Psal.* **That cannot be numbered**—There seems to be a reference in these words to the promises made by God to Abraham, more especially to Gen. 13. 16. Solomon regards the promises as fulfilled in the existing greatness and glory of the Jewish nation. The hyperbolic use of the expressions, "that could not be numbered," "countless," "countless as the stars of heaven," is common in all languages.—*Canon Rawlinson.*

9. **Give . . . an understanding heart**—This understanding heart was a truly kingly heart, seeing that it had a rich and free fellowship with all kinds and classes of people; a sense of that which was common to them all; a power of entering into that which was peculiar to their crafts, localities, temperaments; a facility of distinguishing the person who was fittest for any particular service; in one word, a judgment which was not determined by any thing external, which had its laws and principles in a world that the eye sees not.—*F. D. Maurice.*

derstanding heart<sup>10</sup> to judge thy people, that I may<sup>11</sup> discern between good and bad: for who is able to judge this thy so great a people?

10 And the speech pleased the Lord, that Sol'o-mon had asked this thing.

11 And God said unto him, Because thou hast asked this thing, and hast<sup>12</sup> not asked for thyself 'long life; neither hast asked riches for thyself, nor hast asked the life of thine enemies; but hast asked for

thyself understanding<sup>d</sup> to discern judgment;

12 Behold,<sup>13</sup> I have done according to thy words: <sup>14</sup>lo, I have given thee a wise and understanding heart; so that there was none like thee before thee, neither after thee shall any arise like unto thee.

13 And I have also<sup>15</sup> given thee that which thou hast not asked, both<sup>16</sup> riches and honour: so that there 'shall not be any among the kings like unto thee all thy days.

<sup>10</sup> Psa. 72. 1.—<sup>11</sup> Heb. 5. 14.—<sup>12</sup> Jas. 4. 3.—<sup>13</sup> Many days.—  
Prov. 3. 13-18; 8. 1-36; Eccles. 1. 6.—<sup>14</sup> Matt. 6. 33; Eph.

<sup>d</sup> To hear.—<sup>13</sup> 1 John 5. 14.—<sup>14</sup> Chap. 4. 29; 5. 12; 10. 23, 24;  
3. 20.—<sup>16</sup> Chap. 4. 21, 24; Prov. 3. 16.—<sup>e</sup> Or, hath not been.

To . . . judge between good and bad—This he perceived to be the characteristic function of a ruler. He must know right from wrong; must learn in complicated cases to see into the truth; to see it through the falsehoods with which it might be mixed up; to see it in spite of any falsehoods that might be invented to blacken it.—*F. D. Maurice*. The wisdom, however, that was asked and obtained was not so much of the heart as the head—it was wisdom, not for himself personally, but for his office, such as would qualify him for the administration of justice, the government of a kingdom, and for the attainment of general scientific knowledge.—*R. Jamieson*.

10. The speech pleased the Lord—God is well pleased with his own work in his people; the desires of his own kindling, the prayers of his Spirit's inditing. By this choice Solomon made it appear that he desired to be good more than great, and to serve God's honor more than to advance his own. Those are accepted of God who prefer spiritual blessings to temporal, and are more solicitous to be found in the way of their duty than in the way to preferment.—*M. Henry*. Solomon had asked this thing—Although Solomon's choice was made "in a dream," we must regard it as springing from his will in some degree, and, therefore, indicative of his moral character.—*Canon Rawlinson*.

11. God said—Probably by an inward voice to the soul of Solomon. Long life—Which has ever been considered a happiness, despite the troubles of the earthly condition. Thine enemies—For example, Hadad the Edomite, (1 Kings 11. 14-22,) and Rezon the son of Eliadab, (*ib.*, verses 23-25,) whom Solomon might well have wished to remove. Hadad and Rezon were adversaries to Solomon "all his days."—*Canon Rawlinson*. Understanding to discern judgment—Literally, to know, to hear

judgment; that is, ability to understand how to hear suits or causes, and dispense justice.—*Terry*.

12. Lo, I have given thee—It is the Father's good pleasure to give wisdom to them that seek for it. James 1. 5.—*Terry*. A wise and an understanding heart—Solomon's wisdom was, to a certain extent, a supernatural gift, a signal dispensation of Divine favor, which must not be classed with natural acquirements which are ordinarily obtained by dint of mental application alone. But while this much appears upon the face of the history before us, we must not suppose that all his knowledge was so special and supernatural an endowment as that he received it without any effort on his part. He doubtless studied and toiled, like other men, for his acquirements, but he was divinely and supernaturally assisted in a manner and to an extent which no other man ever enjoyed.—*Terry*. Neither after thee shall any arise like unto thee—It has been proposed to explain this as simply meaning that Solomon was to be the wisest of all the kings of Israel; but more seems to be intended. In the knowledge of what was in man, and in the wisdom to direct men's goings, he was to be the wisest of all mere men. In such wisdom the world would know one only "greater than Solomon." Matt. 12. 42; Luke 11. 31.—*Canon Rawlinson*.

13. I have given thee that which thou hast not asked—Here we see a striking illustration of that law of the Divine government, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." Matt. 6. 33; Luke 12. 31.—*Canon Rawlinson*. Both riches and honor—Let us see here, (1) That the way to obtain spiritual blessings is to be inopportune for them; to wrestle with God in prayer for them, as Solomon did for wisdom, asking that only as the one thing



14 And if thou wilt walk in my ways, to keep my statutes and my commandments, as thy father Da'vid did walk, then I will lengthen <sup>17</sup> thy days.

15 And Sol'o-mon <sup>18</sup>awoke; and be-

<sup>17</sup> Ps. 91, 16; Prov. 3, 7. <sup>18</sup> Gen. 41, 7. — <sup>19</sup> Gen.

*needful.* (2) That the way to obtain temporal blessings is to be indifferent to them, and to refer ourselves to God concerning them. Solomon has wisdom given him, because he *did* ask it, and wealth, because he *did not*.—*M. Henry.*

14. **If thou wilt walk**—This demands something on Solomon's part, a condition to the fulfillment of the promise. **As thy father David**—David sinned, and grievously; but the very prominence given to his sin shows that sin was not in accordance with his true character. He breathed the air of righteousness, and not wickedness, and his lapse into sin, though but momentary, was therefore all the more noticeable. **I will lengthen thy days**—As the condition was not observed, (1 Kings 11. 1-8,) the right to the promise was forfeited, and it was not fulfilled. Solomon can scarcely have been more than fifty-nine or sixty at his death.—*Canon Rawlinson.* No character in the sacred writings, says Dr. Clarke, "disappoints us more than the character of Solomon."

15. **Behold it was a dream**—The vivid impression, the indelible recollection he had of this dream, together with the new and increased energy communicated to his mind, and the flow of worldly prosperity that rushed upon him, gave him assurance that it came by Divine inspiration, and originated in the grace of God.—*R. Jamieson.* **He came to Jerusalem**—The tabernacle was at Gibeon, the ark at Jerusalem, and Solomon's going from the former to the latter place with sacrificial offerings was a most significant act, opening a new epoch in the history of Israelitish worship. It was probably the last public service of the kind in Gibeon, and so, in effect, was a public transfer of sacrificial worship from the wandering, unsettled tabernacle, to that divinely chosen spot where alone henceforth Jehovah would be pleased to accept the more public offerings and vows of Israel.—*Terry.* **Before the ark**—This was on Mount Zion, where it had been taken by David. See Lesson II, 3d Quarter. **Burnt offering**—Sacrifices expressing entire consecration to God, in which the entire offering was consumed upon the altar.

hold, *it was* a dream. And he came to Je-ru'sa-lem, and stood before the ark of the covenant of the Lord, and offered up burnt offerings, and offered peace offerings, and <sup>19</sup>made a feast to all his servants.

<sup>19</sup> 29; chap. 8, 65; Luth. 1, 3; Dan, 5, 1; Mark, 6, 21.

**Peace offering**—Sacrifices following the burnt-offering, in which a part of the offering was eaten in a feast, a part burned, and a part given to the priest. It expressed the thought of fellowship with God, in a relation of acceptance and friendship. **And made feast to all his servants**—A great feast naturally followed on a large sacrifice of peace offerings. In these the sacrificer always partook of the flesh of the victim, and he was commanded to call in to the feast the Levite, the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow. Dent. 14. 29. Compare David's largess, 2 Sam. 6. 19; 1 Chron. 16. 3.—*Canon Rawlinson.*

#### Authorities to be Consulted.

F. D. Maurice's Prophets and Kings, sermon 5. Kito's Daily Bible Illustrations. Hall's Contemplations, book 17. Geikie's Hours with the Bible, vol. iii, chap. 15. Stanley's Jewish Church, lecture 26. Sermons by Edward Payson, Saurin, C. Simeon. Stems and Twigs, i, 16. Preacher's Lantern, iv, 59. Foster's Cyclopedia of Illustrations, [numbers marked with a star refer to poetical illustrations,] ver. 5; 2559, 8148; 7: 3093; 9: 3506, 10141; 11: 2495; 12: \*2299, 3497; 13: 3040, 5107.

#### Practical Thoughts.

##### [THE ROYAL CHOICE.]

1. Every young man like Solomon, on the threshold of life, has a choice of his own ideals of success. Ver. 5.
2. Our thoughts and dreams at night are in our deepest moments often the outgrowth of our thoughts and plans by day. Vers. 5, 6.
3. The result of our life is largely determined by the ideal of success which we set before ourselves. Vers. 6-8.
4. One element of success is to realize our own responsibilities, and our need of Divine assistance. Vers. 7-9.
5. We should choose not for ourselves alone, but in view of others whose lives depend upon our own. Ver. 9.
6. If our choice in life be a wise one, we may be sure that it will be realized, even though it may not always seem so. Ver. 12.

7. The wise choice for God often brings with it the lesser blessing of worldly prosperity. Ver. 13.

#### Sermon Outline.

BY REV. A. D. VAIL, D.D.

We are constantly astonished by the bounty of nature, the rich and varied abundance of the spring-time promise, and the autumn harvests. God shows the same opulence in grace, and his ways and promises are exceeding rich and abundant above all that we can ask or think. How rich the revelation of God to Solomon!

I. *The all-needing child.* Called as he was, and at such an important period of history, the boy Solomon had need of every thing to qualify him for his work. He is wise now in his sense of need; his humility of spirit was his strength. Such should be the heart of every youth as he looks out on life and attempts to measure his responsibilities. If Solomon needed God's blessing, how much more do we need it for ourselves.

II. *The all-including prayer.* The invitation of the Lord made it possible for Solomon to ask for pleasure, or power, or wealth, and God would have given it. But when Solomon asked for wisdom, "his speech pleased the Lord." He was wiser than

he knew, for if we have wisdom, that will bring us joy and health, friends and prosperity, honor and wealth. The wisdom of Solomon's prayer may not have been apparent to himself, but it was the great need of his life, the meeting of the high duties of the place where God had put him. His prayer included every thing.

III. *The all-embracing answer.* God gave him the answer of his prayer, and he was made wise above all other kings. But God also gave him wealth and honor. His wisdom qualified him to gain these lesser gifts. True wisdom teaches us to be self-denying, prudent, saving, kind, earnest, and honest, and these things are the basis of wealth and power and honor. God to-day gives such gifts to Christian people and nations.

IV. *Application.* (1) We should earnestly impress on all of our young people the need of prayer for wisdom to guide them, and that God will surely grant it. (2) The possession of wealth and honor without religion is full of danger to us. Wealth and honor are the gifts of God, and not of the devil; but they may do us much harm unless we cling to religion and use these gifts wisely. (3) The continuance of the blessings of wealth and honor is here conditioned upon keeping God's commandments and walking in his ways.

B. C. 1012.]

#### LESSON IV.

[Oct. 26.

THE TEMPLE BUILT.—1 Kings 6. 1-14.

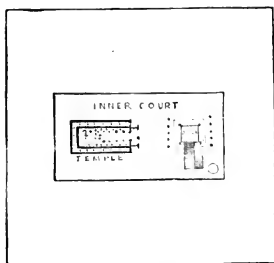
**GOLDEN TEXT.**—Mine house shall be called an house of prayer.—ISA. 56. 7.

TIME.—B. C. 1012.

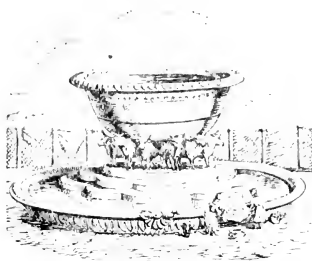
PLACE.—Mount Moriah.

INTRODUCTION.—The first and greatest work of Solomon was the building of the temple. David had purposed in his heart to build such a house for Jehovah, and made vast preparations for it, but was divinely informed that the great enterprise was to be carried out, not by himself, but by his son Solomon. 1 Chron. 22. 6-19; 28. 10-21. The pattern was, in its principal parts, substantially a repetition of the tabernacle; but, in its architectural details, it was doubtless modeled, in some degree, after the great Phœnician, Assyrian, Babylonian, and, perhaps, Egyptian temples of that age, drawing more or less from all these sources: for the science of architecture seems never to have received much attention among the Hebrews. Their fathers dwelt in tents, and, long after their settlement in Canaan, they continued to use the same style of dwelling, as something hereditary which they were loth to abandon. David called in the aid of Phœnician architects and workmen in building his own palace on Zion, and Solomon did the same in building the temple. And to the Phœnician artists, we may reasonably believe, were largely left the minor architectural designs and finish. But the great works of Phœnician architecture have perished; and all present attempts at a complete restoration of the temple from supposed analogies in Assyrian, Babylonian, Persian, or Egyptian monuments, are of doubtful value. Such analogies are of the first importance in the study of comparative architecture, and will greatly help in determining some of the principal parts of the temple; but a restoration of the whole edifice from those sources must be, to a great extent, conjectural. The site of the temple was Ornan's threshing-floor on Mount Moriah, where the angel of Jehovah had appeared to David. 2 Chron. 3. 1. There is no question but it stood somewhere within the present inclosure known as the Haram Area, but the exact part of this area has become a matter of dispute. Ferguson, Lewin, and Thrupp locate the temple in the south-west corner; but the older opinion, which seems to be con-

firmly by the most recent research and the nature of the ground, places it nearly on the site of the Haram-esh-Sherief, which occupies what must have been the rocky ridge of the ancient mountain.—*Terry, The plan of the temple.*—We shall give an idea of the Temple of Solomon by condensing the account in Stanley's *History of the Jewish Church*, Lecture XXVII. On the eastern side was a cloister or colonnade. The later kings, however, continued it all around. This portico opened on a large quadrangle, surrounded by a wall, partly of stone, partly of cedar, and planted with trees. Within this quadrangle was a smaller court, on the highest ridge of the hill, which inclosed the place of David's sacrifice—the rocky threshing-floor of Araunah the Jebusite. This rock was leveled and filled up, so as to make a platform for the altar, which was a square chest of wood, plated outside with brass, filled inside with stones and earth, with the fire on a brass grating at the top, the whole placed on a mass of rough stone.

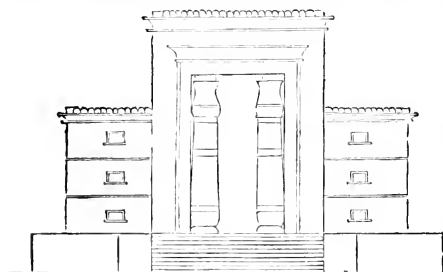


Courts of Solomon's Temple.



The Laver.

South of the altar was the brazen laver, supported on twelve brazen bulls. This was used for the ablutions of the priests as they walked to and fro barefooted over the rocky platform. On each side were the ten lesser movable vessels of brass, on wheels, for the washing of the entrails. Round about the lesser court, in two or three stories raised above each other, were chambers for the priests and other persons of rank. 2 Chron. 31, 11; Jer. 35, 10. In the corners were the kitchens and boiling apparatus. Ezek. 46, 20-24. Each had brazen gates. 2 Chron. 4, 9. In the court was the "temple" properly so called. In front towered the porch, in height more than 300 feet. Behind it was a lower edifice, lessening in height as it approached its extremity. On the sides were small chambers, entered only from without through a sandal-wood door on the south, and gilded chambers above them accessible to the king alone. 1 Kings 6, 8. The two elaborate pillars called Jachin and Boaz stood immediately under the porch. Within



Elevation of the Front of Temple.

another pair of folding-doors led into the holy place. It would have been almost dark were it not that, in place of the original single seven-branched candlestick, ten now stood on ten tables, five on each side. 1 Kings 7, 49. Within the chamber were the tables of show-bread and altar of incense. The holy of holies was separated from the holy place by a "wall of partition," penetrated, however, by folding-doors of olive-wood, over which hung a party-colored curtain embroidered with cherubs and flowers. 1 Kings 6, 31. The holy of holies was a small square chamber, absolutely dark except by the light received through this aperture. In it were two huge golden figures, standing upright on their feet, on each side of the ark, which rested upon a protuberance of rough rock. Above the ark the wings of these cherubims met. The walls of the chambers, which ran round the rest of the building, were not allowed to lean against the outer walls of this sanctuary.—*Schaff.*

1 And it came to pass, in the four hundred and eightieth year after the children of Is'ra-el were come out of the land of E'gypt, in the fourth year of Sol'o-mon's reign over Is'ra-el, in the month Zif, which is the second <sup>a</sup> month, that he <sup>b</sup> began to build the house of the LORD.

<sup>a</sup> Of the sacred year: about the end of April.

1. In the four hundred and eightieth year—The building of the temple, a fixed and splendid house of Jehovah, as the dwelling-place of his name in the midst of his people, formed an important epoch so far as the Old Testament kingdom of God was concerned, inasmuch as, according to the declaration of God made through the prophet Nathan, an end would thereby be put to the provisional condition of the people of Israel in the land of Canaan, since the temple was to become a substantial pledge of the permanent possession of the inheritance promised by the Lord.—*Keil*. In the fourth year of Solomon's reign—The three first years being taken up in settling the affairs of his kingdom, that he might not find any embarrassment from them in this work. It is not time lost which is spent in composing ourselves for the work of God, and disentangling ourselves from every thing which might distract or divert us.—*M. Henry*. The month Zif—Corresponding with our May, or, more generally, extending from the new moon of April to that of May. The Hebrew *Ziv* means *brightness, blossom*, and so becomes appropriately the name of May—the flower month.—*Terry*. The house of the Lord—The temple is called *the house of the Lord*, (verse 1,) because it was (1) Directed and modeled by him. Infinite wisdom was the architect, and gave David the plan or pattern by the Spirit, not by word of mouth only, but, for the greater certainty and exactness in writing, (1 Chron. 28. 11, 12, 19,) as he had given to Moses in the mount a draft of the tabernacle. (2) Dedicated and devoted to him and to his honor, to be employed in his service; so his, as never any other house was, for he manifested his glory in it, (so as never in any other,) in a way agreeable to that dispensation.—*M. Henry*.

Now that Israel was grown more numerous, the place of their meeting needed to be enlarged, (Isa. 54. 1, 2;) and now that they were grown richer, they were the better able to enlarge it. Where God sows plentifully he expects to reap so.—*M. Henry*.

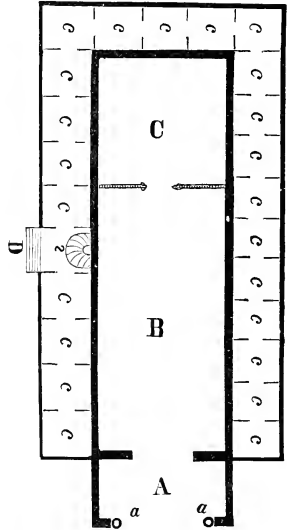
2. The house—The *house*, that is, the main building of the temple, (literally, for the house,

2 And 'the house which king Sol'o-mon built for the LORD, the length thereof was threescore cubits, and the breadth thereof twenty cubits, and the height thereof thirty cubits.

3 And the porch before the temple of the house, twenty cubits was the length

<sup>b</sup> Built.—1 Ezek. 41. 1.

or shell, of the building.)—*Keil*. Threescore cubits—Reckoning the cubit at eighteen inches



Ground Plan of Solomon's Temple.

the length would be ninety feet. These dimensions are probably to be understood of the walls on the inside.—*Terry*. Height . . . thirty cubits—Forty-five feet, just half the length. Josephus says the height was sixty cubits, but most of his statements on the dimensions of buildings are untrustworthy. A comparison with Exod. 26. 15-23, shows that the dimensions of the temple were exactly double those of the tabernacle.—*Terry*.

3. Porch—The vestibule, or entrance way, in front of the temple, marked A in plan. The height of the porch is not here given, but, according to 2 Chron. 3. 4, it was one hundred

thereof, according to the breadth of the house; and ten cubits was the breadth thereof before the house.

4 And for the house he made <sup>c</sup> windows of narrow lights.

5 And <sup>d</sup> against the wall of the house he built <sup>e</sup> chambers round about, against the walls of the house round about, both of the temple and of the

<sup>c</sup> Or, windows broad within and narrow without. — Or, skewed and  
<sup>d</sup> Or, Holy of holies. — <sup>e</sup> Ribb.

and twenty cubits, four times the height of the rest of the building, so as to form a sort of steeple or high tower in front. But the number one hundred and twenty is undoubtedly a corrupt reading. It was supported in the lower part by two massive brazen pillars, (*a a* in plan,) named respectively *Jachin* and *Boaz*, (chapter 7. 15, and 2 Chron. 3. 17;) so that the whole front, with its pillars and ornamentation, must have presented a most imposing and splendid *façade*.—*Terry*. The temple of the house—The temple, as thus distinguished from the house, is to be understood of the *pronaos*, or holy place (B in plan) before the oracle. Compare verses 16, 17. The length thereof—The longer line, which ran parallel to the breadth of the house, is called here the length, though from our point of view we should call it the width. And ten cubits was its breadth, that is, its depth in front of the house.—*Keil*. According to the breadth of the house—Rather, before the breadth of the house. That is, the length of the porch extended before the breadth of the house, and was precisely equal to it, namely, twenty cubits.—*Terry*.

4. He made windows—Windows with lattices, capable of being shut and opened at pleasure, partly to let out the vapor of the lamps, the smoke of the frankincense, and partly to give light.—*Keil*. Narrow lights—This is supposed to mean that they were like the windows in Egyptian temples, wider on the inside of the wall than on the outside.

An account of the windows, (ver. 4:) they were broad within and narrow without, margin. Such should the eyes of our mind be, reflecting nearer on ourselves than on other people, looking much within, to judge ourselves, but little without, to censure our brethren. The narrowness of the lights intimated the darkness of that dispensation in comparison with the Gospel day.—*M. Henry*.

5. Against the wall—That is, around the outer wall of the temple building, probably on the sides and rear, were chambers, but they

of oracle; and he made <sup>f</sup> chambers round about.

6 The nethermost chamber was five cubits broad, and the middle was six cubits broad, and the third was seven cubits broad: for without in the wall of the house he made <sup>h</sup> narrow rests round about, that the beams should not be fastened in the walls of the house.

closed. Ezek. 40. 16. — <sup>f</sup> Or, upon, or, joining to. — Floors. —  
<sup>h</sup> Narrowing, or, rebatement.

were built apart from the house itself, and not resting upon its wall. Such chambers for the priests had grown up around the tabernacle at Shiloh, in the course of the centuries, and are referred to in 1 Sam. 3. 2, 3. In building the temple the general plan of the tabernacle, as it then existed, was followed. Chambers round about—The word, as used here and in Ezekiel 41. 6, means *side chambers*—the different apartments into which the wings above described were partitioned, (*see c c* in plan.) The purpose which these side chambers was designed to serve is nowhere stated in the Scriptures. According to Thienius they were expensively furnished sleeping apartments for the priests. They may also have been used as store-rooms for depositing consecrated gifts and sacred relics.—*Terry*. The temple—Here meaning the holy place. The oracle—The oracle was the most holy place, the innermost apartment of the house, (C in plan.) See on verse 15. Its Hebrew name is *Debir*, derived by a number of scholars from *to speak*; hence the *speaking place*; the place where Jehovah spoke with his people.—*Terry*.

6. The nethermost chamber—In order to preserve the sanctity of the temple, and at the same time to allow the attachment to it of secular buildings—sleeping apartments, probably, for the priests and other attendants—Solomon made “rebatelements” in the wall of the temple, or, in other words, built it externally in steps, thus: The beams, which formed the roof of the chambers and the floors of the upper stories, were then laid on these steps or “rests” in the wall, not piercing the wall, or causing any real union of the secular with the sacred building. It resulted from this arrangement that the lowest chambers were the narrowest, and the uppermost considerably the widest of all, the wall receding each time by the space of a cubit.—*Canon Rawlinson*. Without in the wall—The latter half of this verse is as follows: *For rebatement he gave to the house round about on the outside in order not to fasten in the walls of the house*. That is, these rebatement were pur-

7 And the house, when it was in building, was built of stone made ready before it was brought thither: so that

posely built that the several stories of side chambers, by resting on such ledges of exterior wall, might not in any way penetrate or detract from the strength and wholeness of the main wall of the temple.—*Terry.*

Care was taken that the beams should not be fastened in the walls to weaken them. Verse 6. Let not the Church's strength be impaired under pretense of adding to its beauty or convenience.—*M. Henry.*

7. Built of stone made ready—A subterranean quarry has been very recently discovered

there was neither hammer nor ax nor any tool of iron heard in the house while it was in building.

temple.—*R. Jamieson.* Some of these "great stones" carefully hewn, and beveled at the edge, are probably still to be seen in the place where they were set by Solomon's builders, at the south-western angle of the wall of the Haram Area in the modern Jerusalem. The largest of these are 30 feet long by  $7\frac{1}{2}$  feet high.—*Canon Rawlinson.* The outside of the wall at this spot is the "wailing-place" of the Jews, represented in the engraving, where on each Friday they assemble to mourn the destruction of their ancient city. **Neither hammer nor ax—**



The Jews Wailing Place at Jerusalem.

near Jerusalem, where the temple stones are supposed to have been hewn. There is unequivocal evidence to be found in this quarry that the stones were dressed there, for there are blocks exactly similar in size, as well as in the nature of the stone, to the ancient remains. Thence, probably, they would be moved on rollers down the Tyropæon valley to the very side of the

This fact is noticeable in itself, is also deeply symbolical. It indicates the silent but sure and mighty growth of the kingdom of Christ. His Church, like the silent increase of the mustard seed, rises and spreads, and thus goes on to its completion, every day disclosing more and more the consummate skill and infinite wisdom of the Great Architect.—*Terry.*

8 The door for the middle chamber *was* in the right <sup>4</sup>side of the house: and they went up with winding stairs into the middle chamber, and out of the middle into the third.

9 So he built the house, and finished it; and covered the house <sup>5</sup>with beams and boards of cedar.

10 And *then* he built chambers against all the house, five cubits high: and they rested on the house with timber of cedar.

11 And the word of the LORD came to Sol'o-mon, saying,

<sup>4</sup> Shoulder.—<sup>5</sup> Or, the vault beams and the ceilings with cedar. Rev. 21. 3.—<sup>6</sup> Deut.

**8. The door for the middle chamber**—The middle chamber of the lower story is here meant. The right side of the house would be the south side, and is to be understood of a person facing the same way as the temple, namely, east. So far as the Scripture text gives us any information this one door in the south side seems to have been the only entrance into all the side-chambers. (D in plan.) **They went up**—That is, persons who entered the upper stories went up these stairs. **Winding-stairs**—Marked *s* in *middle*—that is, the middle chamber of the middle story. **Out of the middle into the third**—Out of the middle chamber of the middle story into the middle chamber of the third story. So the staircase was not on the outside of the house, as is usual in the East, but on the inside.—*Terry*.

**9. Finished it**—The form or shape of the roof is left entirely uncertain. Many conclude, from the silence of the text, that, like Oriental buildings generally, its roof was flat.—*Terry*. **Boards of cedar**—The cedar of Lebanon, brought down in rafts from Tyre to Joppa, and thence transported overland. The cedar was considered a very durable wood. The roof of the temple of Diana at Ephesus is said to have lasted four hundred years.

**10. He built chambers**—As already discovered in verses 5, 6. **Five cubits high**—The writer must mean *each* story was of this height. Consequently the side buildings had an internal height of 3x5 cubits, and reckoning the flooring and the roof of the whole building, an external height of 18 or 20 cubits; so that the temple-house, which was thirty cubits high within and about thirty-two without, rose about twelve or fourteen cubits above the side building, and there was plenty of room for the windows in the side walls.—*Keil*.

12 *Concerning* this house which thou art in building, if thou wilt walk in my statutes, and execute my judgments, and keep all my commandments to walk in them; then will I perform my word with thee, which I spake unto Da'vid thy father.

13 And <sup>2</sup>I will dwell among the children of Is'ra-el, and <sup>3</sup>will not forsake my people Is'ra-el.

14 So Sol'o-mon built the house, and finished it.

—<sup>2</sup> Exod. 25. 8; 29. 45; Lev. 26. 11; 2 Cor. 6. 16; Heb. 3. 6; 31. 6; Heb. 13. 5.

**11. The word of the Lord came to Solomon**—Probably by a prophet. It was very seasonable, being designed first to encourage him to go on with the building by confirming anew the promise made to his father David, (2 Sam. 7;) and secondly, to warn him against the pride and presumption of supposing that, after the erection of so magnificent a temple, he and his people would always be sure of the presence and favor of God.—*R. Jamieson*.

**12. If thou wilt walk**—God plainly lets him know that all this charge which he and his people were at, in erecting this temple, would neither excuse them from obedience to the law of God, nor shelter them from his judgments in case of disobedience: keeping God's commandments is better and more pleasing to him than building churches.—*M. Henry*. **My word . . . which I spake unto David**—The promises made to David were—(1) that he should be succeeded by one of his own sons, (2 Sam. 7. 12; Psa. 132. 11;) (2) that the kingdom should be established in the line of his descendants forever if they were faithful, (Psa. 132. 12;) and (3) that the Israelites should be no more afflicted as beforetime. 2 Sam. 7. 10. These promises are now confirmed to Solomon, but on the express condition of obedience, and two further promises are added.—*Canon Rawlinson*.

**13, 14. And will not forsake . . . Israel**—This promise, if not absolutely new, seems to have been at any rate more positive and general than any previous similar promise. Moses promised the people that God would not forsake them *in their struggles with the Canaanites*, (Deut. 31. 6, 8,) and God made a similar promise to Joshua. Josh. 1. 5. But the assurance now given seems to be that God will not *at any time or under any circumstances wholly forsake Israel*.—*Canon Rawlinson*.

If, from the walls, we look into the furniture; what is the altar, whereon our sacrifices of prayer and praises are offered to the Almighty but a contrite heart? What the golden candlesticks, but the illumined understanding, wherein the light of the knowledge of God and his divine will shineth forever? What the table of showbread, but the sanctified memory, which keepeth the bread of life continually? Yea, if we shall presume so far as to enter into the very closet of God's oracle, even there, O God, do we find our unworthy hearts so honored by thee, that they are made thy very ark, wherein thy royal law and the pot of thy heavenly manna are kept forever, and from whose propitiatory, shaded with the wings of thy glorious angels, thou givest the gracious testimonies of thy good Spirit, witnessing with ours that we are the children of the living God.—*Bishop Hall.*

#### Authorities to be Consulted.

Dean Stanley's Lectures on the Jewish Church, lecture 27. C. Geikie's Hours with the Bible, chap. xvi. See Lesson Helps for 1876. Articles on Solomon's Temple in Smith's Dictionary of the Bible, McClinton and Strong's Cyclopaedia, Foster's Cyclopaedia of Illustrations, numbers marked with a star refer to poetical quotations,] ver. 7 : 2495, \*4050, 4052, 4904, 11153.

#### Practical Thoughts.

##### [LESSONS FROM THE TEMPLE.]

1. The magnificence of the building showed the importance of religion to the nation, and the liberality which should be manifested toward God's cause.
2. The altar, standing as its most prominent object, represented the central truth of the Gospel, atonement for sin.
3. The laver represents the purity which is needed by those who would enter into fellowship with God.
4. The holy place represents the Church on earth, with its ordinances and privileges of worship, into which we enter only through the blood sprinkled on the altar.
5. The three objects in the holy place, candlestick, table, altar of incense, represent the three relations of which Christ stands to his Church, as Light of Life, Bread of Life, and Intercessor.
6. The holy of holies represents the Church in heaven, in the immediate presence of God, and separated only by a veil from the Church on earth.

#### Sermon Outline.

BY REV. JESSE BOWMAN YOUNG, A.M.

In history, as in the parable, there is assigned "to every man his work." Solomon's chief work was the building of the temple.

1. *It was a work to which he was providentially designated.* God spoke to David, "Thy son shall build an house to my name." Solomon realized his mission early in life, felt that he was called to it, was inspired and ennobled by the thought of the magnificent enterprise which was to be devolved upon him. The man, engaged in any enterprise, who realizes the Divine purpose molding his life, marking out his changes and shaping his work, may attain unto a measure of similar greatness. "This task is given to me from heaven," is an inspiration. It may be the task of carrying on a vast system of industry, such as a manufacturing establishment, of running an ocean steamer, or teaching a school, or editing a paper, or keeping house, or caring for children, whatever it is, let the consciousness of God's purposes, care, promises, be associated with the work and the task and the worker will both be ennobled.

2. *It was a work for which great preparations had been made.*

Solomon found materials, money, plans, made ready for his hand. He was expected to build; that was an aid in the work, a re-enforcement. He began where David left off, with all the prestige, experience, resources, and wealth accumulated by his father as his own possessions.

Thus is each generation the heir of the riches, learning, heroism, inventions, discoveries, achievements, of all of its predecessors. We inherit the accumulations of the past. The ages have been preparing materials ready to our hand in order that we may build wisely, nobly, enduringly.

3. *In this work Solomon was sustained and guided by the promises of God.* The word of the Lord had pledged to David, as well as to Solomon, success in the enterprise. Depending on these covenants the builder pushed his work on to completion. At last, when done, his utterance of praise and gratitude was, "O Lord, thou hast fulfilled thy word."

4. *The work was pursued in silence.* "There was neither hammer nor ax nor any tool of iron heard in the house while it was building." This indicates the thoroughness of the preparations made, the skill of the workmen, the reverence shown to the sanctuary even while it was going up, and conveys a hint concerning the quiet, worshipful, thoughtful, spirit in which God ought to be approached in his house.

"No workman's steel, no ponderous axes rung,  
Like some tall palm the noiseless fabric sprung."

So, noiselessly, without tumult, like the growth of the seed in the ground, progresses the kingdom of God on earth.

5. The building of the temple, after years of toil and prayer, at last stood forth, a great work completed. Significantly are we told, "So Solomon built the house and finished it." From foundation to cap-stone it was done, lacking nothing, except the revelation of God's presence, and that was added soon to crown and glorify the structure.



Many fail because they are fickle, stop midway, are easily discouraged, do not persevere until their work is perfected.

Learn from this passage :

(1) Life is a building, and all are builders.

(2) Copy in this structure the divine model, build on a firm foundation, and keep on working until the edifice, shapely, strong, a fit dwelling for the King of kings, is complete. Build the house, and finish it.

## B. C. 1005.]

## LESSON V.

[Nov. 2.]

## THE TEMPLE DEDICATED.—1 Kings 8. 22-36.

**GOLDEN TEXT.**—Behold, the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain thee

—1 Kings 8. 27.

**TIME.**—B. C. 1005.

**PLACE.**—The temple on Mount Moriah.

**CONNECTING LINKS.**—(1) Description of the temple and the ornaments, 1 Kings 6. 15-38; 7. 1-51. (2) The men of Israel assemble at Jerusalem, and the priests take up the ark, 1 Kings 8. 1-21.

**INTRODUCTION.**—The people had gathered in vast throngs from every part, from the southern boundary of the land at the Wady-el-Arish, the river of Egypt, to Hamath, far north, on the Orontes, and crowded the temple area, outside the court of the priests. In this last, as many of the sacred orders as the space permitted now took their appointed places. A full choir of Levites, under Asaph, Heman, and Jeduthun, were at the east end of the great altar, with one hundred and twenty priests, bearing the sacred trumpets. A scaffold of polished brass, four and a half feet high, and seven feet square, had been placed for the king in the midst of the court, and to this he now approached, surrounded by all the magnificence which he so much loved, five hundred guards attending him with golden shields. The high officers of his court followed in their grandest robes. So great a monarch could not enter by the same gate as his subjects. A private door had been made specially for himself, connected with the palace on the slope of the hill behind, by a magnificent staircase of sandal-wood. The brazen scaffold served for a temporary throne. An outburst of music from a multitude of performers and singers presently filled the air, the innumerable spectators catching up the ever-recurring refrain, "For He is good, for his mercy endureth for ever." Meanwhile the temple was seen to be filled with a thick darkness, in which all recognized the cloud of the Presence, once the symbol of the Divine glory over the tabernacle of Sinai. So dense was it that it stopped the ministrations of the priests. But Solomon instantly caught its immense significance as a pledge of the acceptance of the temple by Jehovah as his dwelling-place, instead of the tent of meeting, which it superseded. Turning, therefore, to the people, he broke the silence such an awful appearance had imposed. "Jehovah," said he, "has said that he would dwell in the thick darkness. But I have built a house for Thee, (not a mere tent, as hitherto,) even a fixed place for thy dwelling forever." Then, as if himself high-priest as well as king, he proceeded to perform the supreme sacerdotal act by solemnly blessing the assembled people, who stood reverently before him. This ended, he went forward to the great altar. Here, instead of the usual standing posture in devotion, he knelt down, the first instance in Scripture of this attitude and, stretching out his hands toward heaven, uttered a prayer of almost unequalled sublimity, that in all troubles of the nation or individuals, at home or in foreign lands, God might hear and answer the cries directed toward his holy hill. A second priestly benediction from his lips closed this part of the ceremonial.—*C. Geikie.*

22 And Sol'o-mon stood before the altar of the LORD, in the presence of all

the congregation of Is'ra-el, and spread forth his hands toward heaven:

4 2 Chron.

6. 12.

**22. And Solomon stood**—We learn, from 2 Chron. 6. 13, that the king was so placed as to be seen by all present, being raised about five feet above the level of the floor by means of a brazen platform set up before the altar in the midst of the court. We also learn distinctly what is implied below, (in ver. 54,) but omitted here, that, before beginning his prayer, he knelt down upon his knees. — *Canon Rawlinson.*

**Before the altar of the Lord**—He was both

before the altar and in presence of the congregation. The altar here referred to was the great brazen altar of burnt-offerings which stood in the court.—*M. S. Terry.* **Spread forth his hands**—The expression favors the idea that Solomon offered the prayer upon his knees, with his face turned toward the congregation, and not with his back to the people and his face turned toward the temple.—*Keil.*

23 And he said, LORD God of Is'ra-el, <sup>2</sup>there is no God like thee, in heaven above, or on earth beneath, <sup>3</sup>who keepeth covenant and mercy with thy servants that walk <sup>4</sup>before thee with all their hearts;

24 Who hast kept with thy servant Da'vid my father that thou promisedst him: thou spakest also with thy mouth, and hast fulfilled it with thine hand, as it is this day.

25 Therefore now, LORD God of Is'ra-

<sup>2</sup> Exod. 15. 11.—<sup>3</sup> Deut. 7. 9; Neh. 1. 5; Dan. 9. 4.—<sup>4</sup> Gen. 17. from my sight, Psa. 132. 12.—<sup>5</sup> Only if.—<sup>6</sup> 2 Sam. 7. 25.—

He was far from thinking it any disparagement to him to be his own chaplain and the mouth of the assembly to God; and shall any think themselves too great to do this office for their own families? Solomon, in all his other glory, even on his ivory throne, looked not so great as he did now.—*M. Henry.*

23, 24. **There is no God like thee**—Not that there is no god among all those in heaven and earth like Thee, but nothing is like to thee, who art in heaven above and on earth below. Jehovah, the God of Israel, is not compared here with other gods, but on the contrary, is described as the only true God.—*Bahr.* **Who keepeth covenant and mercy**—By granting the blessings promised to his people, the Lord has hitherto proved himself to be the true and only God in heaven and on earth, who keepeth covenant and mercy with those who walk before him with all their heart. This acknowledgment produces the requisite confidence for offering the prayer which is sure of an answer. Matt. 21. 22; Mark 11. 24; Jas. 1. 6.—*Keil.* **Covenant and mercy**—Only as good as thy word, in keeping covenant, but better than thy word in keeping mercy, doing that for them which thou hast not given them an express promise of, provided they walk before thee with all their heart, are zealous for thee, with an eye to thee.—*M. Henry.* **With thy servant David**—The promise to David was, that his son should enjoy the peaceful possession of his kingdom and conquests, especially that he should build the house of God, which David desired, but was not permitted to do. This promise was now fulfilled.

25. **There shall not fail thee a man**—The original promise was given to David indirectly through Nathan, (2 Sam. 7. 11-17,) and was apparently unconditional. But afterward, it would seem, direct information of God's purpose was vouchsafed to David himself. Psa. 89. 3. 4.

el, keep with thy servant Da'vid my father that thou promisedst him, saying, <sup>a</sup>There shall not fail thee a man in my sight to sit on the throne of Is'ra-el; <sup>b</sup>so that thy children take heed to their way, that they walk before me as thou hast walked before me.

26 And <sup>c</sup>now, O God of Is'ra-el, let thy word, I pray thee, be verified, which thou spakest unto thy servant Da'vid my father.

27 But <sup>d</sup>will God indeed dwell on the

<sup>1</sup>; 2 Kings 20. 3.—<sup>a</sup> There shall not be cut off unto thee a man. <sup>6</sup> 2 Chron. 2. 6; Psa. 113. 4; Isa. 66. 1; Jer. 23. 24; Acts 7. 49; 17. 24.

It was then that the condition of continued obedience was revealed. See Psa. 132. 12.—*Canon Rawlinson.* **So that thy children take heed**—Better, *only if thy children*, etc., as in the margin. The Divine promises can be fully realized only on conditions of righteousness in the people. They comfort those who "walk uprightly."—*M. S. Terry.*

The experiences we have of God's performing his promises should encourage us to depend upon them, and plead them with God; and those who expect further mercies must be thankful for former mercies.

26. **And now**—The expression "and now" introduces the prayer for the further fulfillment of the promise, never to allow a successor upon the throne to be wanting to David, in the same conditional form in which David had uttered the hope in chap. 2. 4, and in which the Lord had renewed the promise to Solomon during the building of the temple. Chap. 6. 12, 13.—*Keil.* **Let thy word . . . be verified**—God's promises must be both the guide of our desires, and the ground of our hopes and expectations in prayer. David had prayed, (2 Sam. 7. 25,) *Lord, do as thou hast said.* Note: Children should learn of their godly parents how to pray and plead in prayer.—*M. Henry.* **Which thou spakest unto David**—Solomon has here in mind one particular point in the promise, namely, that God would not withdraw his mercy from the seed of David, even when it sinned. This is evident from what follows, where he mentions simply cases of transgression, and prays that they may be forgiven.—*Keil.*

27. **Will God indeed dwell on the earth**—Solomon combines with his belief in Jehovah's special presence in the temple, which is the foundation of his whole prayer, (see verses 29, 30, 33, 35, 38, etc.) the strongest conviction that he is no local or finite deity, but is ever present every-where.—*Canon Rawlinson.* **The**

earth? Behold, the heaven, and <sup>7</sup> heaven of heavens, cannot contain thee; how much less this house that I have builded!

28 Yet have thou respect unto the <sup>8</sup> prayer of thy servant, and to his supplication, O Lord my God, to hearken unto the cry and to the prayer which thy servant prayeth before thee to-day.

29 That thine eyes may be open toward this house night and day, *even*

<sup>7</sup> 2 Cor. 13. 2.—<sup>8</sup> Phil. 4. 6.—<sup>9</sup> Dan. 6. 10.—<sup>10</sup> Or, in this place.—<sup>11</sup> Exod. 34. 6, 7; Psa. 85. 2; 103. 2, 3;

heaven, and heaven of heavens—His exaltation above the world is expressed as clearly and forcibly as possible; Solomon does not intend to guard against the delusion that God really dwells in temples, but simply to meet the erroneous idea that he dwells in the temple as men dwell in a house, namely, shut up within it, and not also outside and above it—a delusion which sometimes forced its way into the unspiritual nation, but which was always attacked by the prophets. Cf. Mic. 3. 11; Jer. 7. 4, etc. For it is evident that Solomon did combine with his clear perception of the infinite exaltation of God a firm belief in his real presence in the temple.—*Keil*. An expression of pious wonder and astonishment, and, with the sequel, an utter refutation of those rationalistic critics who affirm that the Israelites had no worthy and enlarged conceptions of Deity.—*Terry*. **How much less this house**—This house, therefore, was not built as if it were proportionable to thy greatness, or could contain thee, but only that therein we might serve and glorify thee.—*Pool*. **Which I have builded**—When we have done the most we can for God, we must acknowledge the infinite distance and disproportion between us and him, between our services and his perfections.—*M. Henry*.

28, 29. **Have thou respect unto the prayer of thy servant**—It was an humble prayer, *the prayer of thy servant*; an earnest prayer, such a prayer as is a cry; a prayer made in faith, “before thee, as the Lord, and my God; Lord, *hearken to it; have respect to it*, not as the prayer of Israel’s king,” (no man’s dignity in the world, or titles of honor, will recommend him to God,) “but as the prayer of thy servant.”—*M. Henry*. **That thine eyes may be open**—These words do not mean that God was besought to watch over the building, and take it under his almighty protection, but always to see when any one prayed there, and

toward the place of which thou hast said, My name shall be there; that thou mayest hearken unto the prayer which thy servant shall <sup>9</sup> make <sup>10</sup> toward this place.

30 And <sup>10</sup> hearken thou to the supplication of thy servant, and of thy people Is’ra-el, when they shall pray <sup>11</sup> toward this place; and hear thou in heaven thy dwelling place; and when thou hearest, <sup>11</sup> forgive.

place.—<sup>10</sup> 2 Chron. 20. 9; Neh. 1. 6.—<sup>11</sup> Or, in this place. 10; 4; Dan. 9. 9; Matt. 6. 12; 1 John 1. 9.

to hear his prayer, to turn his eyes and ears toward the house. Comp. Psa. 34. 16.—*Buhr*. **The place of which thou hast said**—The reference seems to be, not to any single text, but to the many passages in Deuteronomy where God speaks of a place which he will choose in one of the tribes to “set his name” there, to which the Israelites are thenceforward to bring their offering. Deut. 12. 5, 11, 18, etc.; 14. 23; 15. 20; 16. 2, etc. The choice of Jerusalem as the place seems to have been made by special revelation to David. See Psa. 78. 68; 132. 13; and comp. 1 Chron. 22. 1.—*Canon Rawlinson*. **My name**—My presence, and glory, and grace.—*Pool*. **Hearken unto the prayer . . . toward this place**—Because the name of God will be in the temple, that is, because God will manifest his gracious presence there: he will also keep his eyes open upon it, so as to hear the prayer of Solomon directed toward it.—*Keil*.

30. **When they shall pray toward this place**—“Toward” is better than the marginal “in.” Wherever they were the Jews always worshiped *toward* the temple. See Psa. 5. 7; 28. 2; 138. 2; Jonah 2. 4; and, more especially, Dan. 6. 10.—*Canon Rawlinson*. **Thy dwelling place**—Which he adds, that the people might not idolize the temple, nor presume upon it, as if God were now fast tied to them, as having no other dwelling-place; and to direct them in all their addresses to God in his temple, to lift up their eyes above it, even to heaven, where God’s most true and most glorious dwelling-place is.—*Pool*. **And when thou hearest, forgive**—Literally, “both hear and forgive,” that is, “hear the prayer, and forgive the sin” which alone causes God to chasten men or to withhold from them his choicest blessings.—*Canon Rawlinson*.

Nothing but forgiveness of sin can remove the curse by which transgression is followed.—*Keil*.

31 If any man trespass against his neighbour,<sup>e</sup> and an oath be laid upon him to cause him to swear, and the oath come before thine altar in this house:

32 Then hear thou in heaven, and do, and judge thy servants, condemning<sup>12</sup> the wicked, to bring his way upon his head; and justifying the righteous, to give him according to his righteousness.

33 When<sup>13</sup> thy people Is'ra-el be smitten down before the enemy, because they have sinned against thee, and<sup>14</sup> shall

<sup>e</sup> And he required an oath of him.—<sup>12</sup> Deut. 25. 1.

31. If—This general prayer is then particularized, from verse 31 onward, by the introduction of *seven* special petitions for an answer in the different cases in which, in future, prayers may be offered to God in the temple. The *first* prayer (verses 31, 32) has reference to the oaths sworn in the temple, the sanctity of which God is asked to protect.—*Keil*. **If any man trespass against his neighbor**—The prayer refers to the cases mentioned in Exod. 22. 7-13, and Lev. 6. 2-5, when property intrusted to any one had been lost or injured, or when a thing had been found and the finding was denied, or when an act of fraud had been committed; in which cases the law required not only compensation with the addition of a fifth of its value, but also a trespass-offering as an expiation of the sin committed by taking a false oath. But as this punishment could only be inflicted when the guilty person afterward confessed his guilt, many false oaths might have been sworn in the cases in question and have remained unpunished, so far as men were concerned. Solomon, therefore, prays that the Lord will hear every such oath that shall have been sworn before the altar, and work, that is, actively interpose, and judge his servants, to punish the guilty and justify the innocent.—*Keil*. **An oath be laid upon him**—According to the requirement of the law in Exod. 22. 7-11, which provided that if a man suspect his neighbor of any kind of trespass, and has no evidence to convict him, he can require him to make oath of his integrity.—*Terry*.

32. **Judge thy servants**—Human tribunals often clear the guilty and condemn the righteous; but Solomon prays that in every case of oaths concerning trespass brought before that altar, the right may be vindicated.—*Terry*. **Justifying the righteous, to give him according to his righteousness**—To vindicate him, and to manifest his integrity.—*Pool*.

turn again to thee, and confess thy name, and pray, and make supplication unto thee<sup>f</sup> in this house:

34 Then hear thou in heaven, and forgive the sin of thy people Is'ra-el, and bring them again unto the land which thou gavest unto their fathers.

35 When heaven is shut up, and there is no rain, because they have sinned against thee; if they pray toward this place, and confess thy name, and turn from their sin, when thou afflictest them:

<sup>13</sup> Deut. 28. 25.—<sup>14</sup> Lev. 26. 39.—<sup>f</sup> Or, toward.

33. **When thy people Israel be smitten down**—The *second* petition refers to the threatenings in Lev. 26. 17, and Deut. 28. 25, where the nation is threatened with defeat and subjugation on the part of enemies who shall invade the land.—*Keil*. **Confess thy name**—Give glory to thy name, by acknowledging their sins and thy justice, and by accepting the punishment of their iniquity; and by trusting to thy power and goodness alone for their deliverance.—*Pool*. **Turn again to thee**—As in times of humiliation before their enemies the people of God more than once were led to repent of their sins and turn to God. **Supplication unto thee in this house**—Margin, "toward this house." If they were banished into a strange land, how could they pray *in this house*, as they are said to do, ver. 33<sup>†</sup> (1.) That may be rendered *to or toward this house*, as it is expressed vers. 29, 30. The Hebrew preposition *beth*, in, being often put for *el, to or toward*. (2.) This may be understood of divers persons; and so the sense is this: When the people of Israel be defeated in battle, and many of their brethren be taken prisoners, and carried into captivity; if then their brethren remaining in the land shall pray heartily for their captive brethren, they shall be delivered.—*Pool*.

34. **Bring them again into the land**—To be taken away from the land of promise, to be separated from communion with the covenant people, in whose midst Jehovah dwelt, and to live among heathen, was the greatest of all misfortunes to an Israelite, and it was very natural to pray against it.—*Baker*.

35. **Heaven**—The lower heaven, in which clouds are; as Deut. 11. 17; Psa. 14. 7. **Is shut up**—The heaven is compared to a great store-house in God's keeping, out of which nothing can be had so long as it is close shut up.—*Pool*. **There is no rain**—The withholding of

36 Then hear thou in heaven, and forgive the sin of thy servants, and of thy people Is'ra-el, that thou teach <sup>18</sup> them the <sup>16</sup> good way where-

<sup>16</sup> Psa. 5, 8; 25, 4, 5; 27, 11; 86, 11; 94, 12; Psa. 119, 133;

rain in case of sin was also threatened by the law. See Lev. 26, 19; Deut. 11, 17; 28, 23, 24.—*Canon Rawlinson.*

36. Hear . . . forgive . . . teach—Translate, "when thou art teaching them (by thy chastisement) the good way that they should walk in," that is, when thou art still teaching, not taking vengeance.—*Canon Rawlinson.* **That thou teach them the good way**—Not only by thy word, for that was done before; but by their afflictions, which is one of God's schools; and especially, by thy Spirit, enlightening their minds and inclining their hearts, that they may learn and profit both by the word and by their afflictions. And this is here fitly added, to show that he could not expect and did not desire from God the pardon of their sins, but upon God's terms, to wit, upon their true repentance.—*Pol.* **Give rain**—The order of Solomon's prayer is very observable: first and chiefly he prays for their repentance and forgiveness, which is the chief blessing, and the only solid foundation of all other mercies; and then he prays for the temporal mercies; thereby teaching us what to mind and desire principally in our prayers, which also Christ had taught us in his perfect pattern and form of prayer; wherein there is but one petition for outward, and all the rest are for spiritual, blessings.—*Pol.*

He supposes, *first*, that the cause of the judgment would be sin, and nothing else. If they be smitten before the enemy, if there be no rain, it is because they have sinned against thee; that is it that makes all the mischief. *Secondly*, that the consequence of the judgment would be that they would cry to God, and make supplication to him in or toward that house. Those that slighted him before would solicit him then: *Lord, in trouble have they visited thee: In their affliction they will seek me early and earnestly.* *Thirdly*, that the condition of the removal of the judgment was something more than bare praying for it. He could not, he would not, ask that their prayer might be answered unless they did also turn from their sin, (ver. 35.) and turn again to God, (ver. 33;) that is, unless they did truly repent and reform. On no other terms may we look for salvation, in this world or the other.—*M. Henry.*

#### Authorities to be Consulted.

Dean Stanley's Lectures on the History of the Jewish Church, lecture 27. Geikie's Hours

in they should walk, and give rain upon thy land, which thou hast given to thy people for an inheritance.

143, 5; Isa. 35, 8; Hosea 2, 21.—181 Sam. 12, 23; Jer. 6, 16.

with the Bible, chap. xvi. Ewald's History of Israel. Kitto's History of the Bible. Foster's Cyclopedia of Illustrations, [numbers marked with a star refer to poetical quotations,] ver. 22: 4009; 23: 7593, 8607; 24: 4750; 27: \*511, 2049, 2536; 29, 30: 4525, 11061; 32: 10075; 33, 34: 4079; 35, 36: 4535.

#### Practical Thoughts.

##### [PUBLIC PRAYER TO GOD.]

1. Kings and chiefs of the state are nowhere nobler than when leading their people in public prayer to God. Ver. 22.
2. Public prayer should be offered in a reverent position of the body. Ver. 22.
3. Public prayer should contain praise and thanksgiving to God for all his mercies toward his people. Ver. 23.
4. Public prayer should recognize God's fulfillment of his promises, and call attention to his faithfulness. Ver. 24.
5. Public prayer should plead God's faithfulness to promise in the past as a ground of present petition. Vers. 25, 26.
6. Public prayer should be accompanied with confession of sins and petition for forgiveness. Ver. 30.
7. Public prayer should recognize national evils as the result of national sins, and should beseech mercies, not only upon the individual, but upon the nation.

#### Sermon Outline.

BY REV. D. S. MONROE, D.D.

The text brings us within the sacred precincts of the temple, complete in every part, the people assembled, and the king offering the impressive prayer of dedication. This prayer embodies:

##### 1. An ascription of praise. Vers. 23, 24.

It is right to desire applause. Commendation is not flattery. The "well done" of God is the highest aim of a good man. God delights in ascriptions of praise. The psalms are filled with them. We here find,

##### 1. A recognition of God's majesty. Ver. 23.

As all our hopes rest upon the character of God, we should have a profound sense of his greatness. In proportion to the elevated position of those we trust is our confidence increased.

2. *A recognition of God's accessibility.* Ver. 24.

A contemplation of the Divine majesty solely is calculated to fill us with awe; but when God declares that, though "high and lofty," he has "respect unto the lowly," our trusting heart draws near him, and the tearful eye is filled with the light of faith. The knowledge that we have his presence with us strengthens for duty, our work becomes more effectual, and we feel that, however insignificant the deed, it is a part of God's great plan.

3. *A recognition of God's faithfulness.* Ver. 28.

Confidence in God, and encouragement in Christian work, rest upon the conviction that what we do for him cannot be in vain. The school-boy studies in hope, the miner digs in hope, the warrior plans in hope, but the Christian is assured of success. Has not God said: "He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him?" and "He is faithful that promised."

#### II. An acknowledgment of unworthiness.

Instead of complaining at our lot, we should endeavor to realize our littleness. How ill-deserved is even the least favor we receive from God! Of what profit are our works to God? This unworthiness is observed when we consider,

1. *God's condescension.* Ver. 27.

What wonderful thoughts are associated with the condescension of God! How, in order to give us some idea of his character and love, he accommodates himself to our comprehension.

2. *God's willingness to answer prayer.* Ver. 28.

How consoling the thought that He who fills the heavens with ten thousand beams of light, and the forests with loveliest songs of birds, and the earth with its variegated forms of beauty, will bear the cry of the humblest soul, and breathe into it the "peace which passeth all understanding."

3. *God's willingness to forgive sins.* Ver. 30.

How well God knows the depths of human sin! But the more profoundly we feel our need the more willing is he to help us look up to him and be saved. He does not require us to know *how* he forgives, but we may know *when*.

III. *A supplication for special favors.* Vers. 30, 36.

The character of our desires often determines the manner of God's answers. The mere form of prayer does not avail, nor is a general belief in God's condescension and his willingness to answer prayer sufficient.

1. *It must be specific and personal.* Ver. 28.

Said Paul, "For this cause I bow my knees." David's prayer was threefold: "Blot out *my transgression*, wash me thoroughly from *mine iniquity*, and cleanse me from *my sin*." So Solomon specifies the blessings he asks.

2. *It should not be selfish.* Ver. 31.

Union with Christ gives us enlarged sympathy with our fellow-men. In proportion as we see ourselves we feel for others. Knowing our own faults, we more readily bear with the faults of others. Feeling our own need, we more freely supplicate Divine aid for others.

3. *It should be offered for our country.* Vers. 33-37.

Devotedness to the kingdom of Christ does not decrease patriotism, but intensifies it. Especially should this be true in our land, where so much depends upon the virtue of the people. Hence the responsibility of teachers, for the secret of a nation's well-being is not so much in its material resources as in the Divine favor; and this truth must be instilled into the minds of children.

#### APPLY.

Individuals have a claim upon the prayers of God's people.

If this nation is to be saved from ruin, its salvation depends upon the Divine favor.

#### THE WISDOM OF SOLOMON.—1 Kings 10. 1-13.

**GOLDEN TEXT.**—Behold, a greater than Solomon is here.—MATT. 12. 42.

TIME.—B. C. 995.

PLACE.—Jerusalem.

INTRODUCTION.—This account of the Queen of Sheba's visit to Solomon seems to be inserted here because of its association with his commerce with Ophir. The traders at Ophir spread the fame of the great king of Israel in all that land, (see note on chap. 9. 28;) and the queen, eager to acquire wisdom, and curious to test the truth of the reports she heard, made a long journey to visit him. We see in her the laudable desire to acquire wisdom, and the custom, so common in the ancient time, of making long journeys to visit noted seats of learning, and to converse with men noted for their wisdom. Her example condemns many of this generation who, having even better opportunities than hers, and a greater than Solomon to consult, neglect to acquire the heavenly wisdom which is more precious than rubies, and a tree of life to them that lay hold on her. Comp. Matt. 12. 42.—Terry.

1 And when the <sup>1</sup>queen of She'ba heard of the fame of Sol'o-mon, concerning the name of the Lord, she came <sup>2</sup> to prove him with hard questions.

2 And she came to Je-ru'sa-lem with

<sup>1</sup>2 Chron. 9. 1; Matt. 12. 42; Luke 11. 31.

### 1. The queen of Sheba



As there is a She'ba among the sons of Cush, (Gen. 10. 7,) and another She'ba among the sons of Joktan, (cf. 28,) a doubt has arisen whether the "queen of She'ba" was an Ethiopian or an Arabian princess. The expression, "Queen of the

South," which is applied to her by our Lord, (Matt. 12. 42,) would suit equally well either country. And both countries profess to have traditions on the subject connecting the queen of She'ba with their history. In both countries, too, curiously enough, government by queens was common. Still, there is little difficulty here in deciding between the rival claims, since those of Arabia decidedly preponderate. The Arabian She'ba was the great spice country of the ancient world (Strabo, xvi. 4, sec. 19;) whereas Ethiopia furnished no spices. The Arabian She'ba was an important kingdom. She'ba in Ethiopia was a mere town, subject to Meroë. If Ophir be placed in Arabia, there will be an additional reason for regarding She'ba as in the same quarter, since then Solomon's trade with that place will account for his fame having reached the Sabeian princess.—*Canon Rawlinson*. The Arabs call the name of this queen Balkis.—*Terry*. The fame of Solomon concerning the name of the Lord—In other words, the fame which Solomon had acquired through the name of the Lord, or through the fact that the Lord so glorified himself in him.—*Kil*. The clause is confessedly very obscure. May it not mean what we should call "his religious fame," as distinct from his artistic, literary, military, or political fame—"his fame as respected God and the things of God"—or, in other words, "his moral and religious wisdom?"—*Canon Rawlinson*. She came to prove him with hard questions—A common custom among the Arabs of ancient and modern times, to test the sagacity and wisdom of distinguished persons. Josephus relates that

a very great train, with camels that bare spices, and very much gold, and precious stones; and when she was come to Sol'o-mon, she communed with him of all that was in her heart.

<sup>2</sup>Judges 14. 12; Proverbs 1. 6.

Hiram, king of Tyre, and Solomon also, tried to puzzle each other with riddles and enigmatical sayings. "The spirit of this asking of questions and solving of dark riddles is of the very nature of the Socratic wisdom itself."—*Stanley*.

We know merchants that venture to either Indies for wealth; others we know daily to cross the seas for wanton curiosity; some few philosophers we have known to have gone far for learning, and among princes it is no unusual thing to send their ambassadors to far-distant kingdoms for transaction of businesses either of State or commerce; but that a royal lady should in person undertake and overcome so tedious a journey only to observe and inquire into the mysteries of nature, art, religion, is a thing past both parallel and limitation.—*Bishop Hall*.

2. She came to Jerusalem—A journey of a thousand or twelve hundred miles.—With a very great train—A long train of beasts of burden forms the common way of traveling in Arabia; and the presents specified consist of the native produce of that country. Of course, a royal equipage would be larger and more imposing than an ordinary caravan.—*R. Jamieson*. Spices—They were chiefly frankincense, myrrh, opobalsam, gum tragacanth, and kadannu. The special spice country is the Yemen, which corresponds with the territory assigned by the classical writers to the Sabeans.—*Canon Rawlinson*. And very much gold—At present there are not, so far as we know, any gold-mines in Arabia. Still, gold may have been found there anciently, as Agatharcides and others declare that it was. Strabo relates that the Sabeans were enormously wealthy, and used gold and silver in a most lavish manner in their furniture, their utensils, and even on the walls, doors, and roofs of their houses.—*Canon Rawlinson*. And precious stones—The chief precious stones which Arabia now yields are the onyx and the emerald. Anciently she is said to have produced, besides these gems, the following: Adamant, amethysts, chrysolites, hematites, sards, sardonyxes, and several stones for which modern jewelers have no names. Pearls, too, were readily procurable in Arabia from the Persian Gulf fishery.—*Canon Rawlinson*. Of all that was in her heart—We do not mean enigmas in the sense of those that used to be

3 And Sol'o-mon <sup>a</sup> told her all her <sup>a</sup> questions; there was not *any* thing hid from the king, which he told her not.

4 And when the queen of She'ba had seen all Sol'o-mon's wisdom, and the house that he had built,

5 And the meat of his table, and the sitting of his servants, and the <sup>b</sup> attendance of his ministers, and their apparel, and his <sup>c</sup> cup-bearers, and his <sup>d</sup> ascent by

<sup>a</sup> Proverbs 1, 5; Isaiah 50, 4.—<sup>a</sup> Words.—<sup>b</sup> Standing.—<sup>c</sup> Or, butlers.—<sup>d</sup> 1 Chron. 26, 16.—<sup>d</sup> Word.—<sup>e</sup> Or, sayings, and goodness to the fame.

propounded at meals or otherwise; the queen did not want any trial of skill in enigmas with Solomon, but wished to propound important and difficult questions to him.—*Bahr*.

When we come to a rich treasure, we need not be bidden to carry away what we are able. This wise lady, as she came far for knowledge, so, finding plenty of this vein, she would not depart without her full load; there was nothing wherein she would leave herself unsatisfied. She knew that she could not every day meet with a Solomon, and, therefore, she makes her best use of so learned a master; now she empties her heart of all her doubts, and fills it with instruction.—*Bishop Hall*.

3. Told her all her questions—Literally the Hebrew runs, "And Solomon told her all her *words*; there was not a *word* hid from the king, that he told her not." Solomon, that is, answered all her questions without any exception.—*Canon Rawlinson*.

4. The house which he had built—His royal palace, not the Lord's house, which, it would seem, she was not permitted to enter, but only saw the ascent to it by which the king went up. We incline, with a number of recent authorities, to place the palace of Solomon at the south-east corner of the modern Haram area. Here Captain Warren's excavations revealed walls as ancient as the time of Solomon, and here he locates the ancient palace.—*Terry*.

5. The sitting of his servants—"The seat of his retainers and the standing of his servants," that is, the places in the palace assigned to the ministers and servants of the king, which were contrived with wisdom and arranged in a splendid manner.—*Keil*. The attendance—Or, the *standing-places*. The serving-posts or positions of duty assigned to the ministers. All of these were doubtless arranged and adorned in a splendid style.—*Terry*. His ministers—A higher order of servants than those whose sitting-places have just been mentioned. They were attendants on the king's person, stood in

which he went up unto the house of the Lord; there was no more spirit in her.

6 And she said to the king, It was a true <sup>e</sup> report that I heard in mine own land of thy <sup>e</sup> acts, and of thy wisdom.

7 Howbeit I believed not the words, until I came, and mine eyes had seen *it*; and, behold, the half was not told me: <sup>f</sup> thy wisdom and prosperity exceedeth the fame which I heard.

his presence, and all their duties brought them more or less into immediate proximity to Solomon.—*Terry*. And their clothing—Which they received from the king.—*Keil*. Cup-bearers—Or *butlers*; whose office it was to take charge of the royal plate, and to pour out and bring wine to the king. See Neh. 1. 11. Some understand the word of the *drinking-vessels* which he used.—*Terry*. His ascent—The private entrance or passage-way, magnificently wrought, by which he ascended to the temple from some part of his own house. Comp. 2 Kings 16. 18; 1 Chron. 26. 16. From this it appears that the palace was at a lower elevation than the temple, and probably on the southern slope of Moriah.—*Terry*. There was no more spirit in her—She was astonished, and rapt up in a kind of ecstasy, and could scarce determine whether she did really see these things, or whether it was not only a pleasant dream.—*Pool*.

6, 7. She said to the king—She then said, with astonishment, to Solomon, that of what her eyes now saw she had not heard the half through the report which had reached her of his affairs and of his wisdom, and which had hitherto appeared incredible to her.—*Keil*. Thy . . . prosperity—The Hebrew word here used may mean either "prosperity" or "goodness." Prosperity seems to be intended in this place.—*Canon Rawlinson*.

Usually things are represented to us, both by common fame and by our own imagination, much greater than we find them when we come to examine them; but here the truth exceeded both fame and fancy. Those who, through grace, are brought to experience the delights of communion with God, will say that the one half was not told them of the pleasures of Wisdom's ways and the advantages of her gates. Glorified saints, much more, will say that it was a true report which they hear of the happiness of heaven, but that the thousandth part was not told them. 1 Cor. 2. 9.

—*M. Henry*.



8 Happy <sup>are</sup> thy men, happy <sup>are</sup> these thy servants, which stand continually before thee, *and* that hear thy wisdom.

9 Blessed <sup>be</sup> the LORD thy God, which delighted in thee, to set thee on the throne of Is-ra-el: because the LORD loved Is-ra-el forever, therefore <sup>made</sup> he thee king, <sup>to</sup> do judgment and justice.

10 And she gave the king an hundred

<sup>6</sup> Prov. 8, 3.—<sup>7</sup> Chap. 5, 7.—<sup>8</sup> Dan. 2, 21.—<sup>9</sup> 2 Sam. 8, 15, 7 Algum trees.

8. **Happy are thy men**—It is a great advantage to be in good families, and to have opportunity of frequent converse with those that are wise, and good, and communicative. Many have this happiness who know not how to value it. With much more reason may we say this of Christ's servants, *Blessed are they that dwell in his house, they will be still praising him.*—*M. Henry.*

9. **Blessed be the Lord**—An acknowledgment of Jehovah as the God of Israel was reconcilable with polytheism. And the fact that nothing is said about her offering sacrifice in the temple shows that the conversion of the queen is not to be thought of here.—*Keil.* **Which delighteth in thee**—What she saw and heard excited her wonder to such a degree that it seemed to her directly imparted by the God Solomon adored, and for whom she became filled with reverence.—*Bahr.* **To do judgment and justice**—That is, to execute just judgment among them, to govern them with right and equity. She tacitly admonisheth Solomon, that he was not made king that he might live in ease and pleasure and splendor, but for the good of his people.—*Pool.*

Rulers are given their high position by God, not simply to enjoy the pleasures of life, and to see good days, but to administer justice to their subjects, and care for their temporal and eternal welfare.—*Osiander.*

10. **A hundred and twenty talents of gold**—About three millions and a half of dollars. That the gold of Sheba should be given to Solomon was prophesied by the writer of Psalm 72.—*Canon Raulinsson.* **And of spices very great store**—The immense abundance of spices in Arabia, and especially in the Yemen or Sabæan country, is noted by many writers. Herodotus says that the whole tract exhales an odor marvelously sweet, (iii, 113.) Diodorus relates that the odor was carried out to sea to a considerable distance from the shore, (ii, 46.) According to Strabo, the spice-trade of Arabia was in the hands of two nations, the Sabæans and the Ger-

and twenty talents of gold, and of spices very great store, and precious stones: there came no more such abundance of spices as these which the queen of Sheba gave to king Sol'o-mon.

11 And <sup>was</sup> the navy also of Hiram, that brought gold from <sup>the</sup> Ophir, brought in from Ophir great plenty of <sup>and</sup> almug trees, and precious stones.

<sup>12</sup> Psalm 72, 7.—<sup>13</sup> Prov. 8, 15.—<sup>14</sup> Chap. 9, 17.—<sup>15</sup> Job 22, 24.—<sup>16</sup> Chron. 9, 10.

rheans, whose profits from it were so enormous that in his time they were the two wealthiest nations on the face of the earth.—*Canon Raulinsson.*

Thus she paid for the wisdom she had learned, and did not think she bought it dear. Let those that are taught of God give him their hearts, and the present will be more acceptable than this of gold and spices.—*M. Henry.*

11. **The navy also of Hiram**—See chap. 9, 26-28. The ships were Solomon's, but the sailors were Tyrians furnished by King Hiram, as the Israelites of that age were but little accustomed to commerce and seafaring. In monarchical countries of the ancient time business was not conducted by private enterprise, but by agents in behalf of the king. **Gold from Ophir**—The controversy concerning the locality of Ophir will probably never be settled. It has been placed



Sandal-wood.

in Arabia, in India, in the Burmese peninsula, at Ceylon, on the east coast of Africa, in Armenia, in Phrygia, in Iberia, and in South America, where it has been identified with Peru. Among these various opinions three predominate, all moderns, except a very few, being in favor either of Arabia, India, or Eastern Africa. Africa has comparatively few advocates, but M. Quatremere and Dean Milman are among them. India is preferred by Lasso, Thenius, Ewald, and Ber-

12 And <sup>11</sup> the king made of the almug trees <sup>4</sup> pillars for the house of the LORD, and for the king's house, harps also and psalteries for singers: there came no such almug trees, nor were seen unto this day.

<sup>11</sup> 2 Chron. 9. 11.—<sup>4</sup> A prop. or rails.

theau. Arabia's claims are supported by the greatest number, among whom are Winer, Keil, Kalisch, and Mr. Twistleton. The grand argument in favor of Arabia is derived from the occurrence of Ophir in the manifestly Arabian list of names in Gen. 10. 25-29.—*Canon Rawlinson*. **Of almug trees**—Josephus describes them as a sort of *pine*; Shaw understands the *cypress* to be meant; but most moderns identify this tree with the *sandal-wood*, which was celebrated in the East from very early times as a fine-grained and fragrant tree.—*Terry*.

12. **Pillars**—Rather, a *balustrade* to fend the side of some elevated passage or stair-way. The latter meaning is here the more probable. The balustrades of the stair-ways in the temple and in the palace were made of this celebrated wood.—*Terry*. **Harps also**—The Jewish harp (*kinnor*) was of a triangular shape, and had ordinarily ten strings.—*Canon Rawlinson*. **Psalteries**—See Third Quarter, Lesson II, versé 5, notes.

13. **All her desire**—Whatever of a portable nature she desired to carry home with her as mementos of Solomon's greatness and glory.—*Terry*. **Whatsoever she asked**—Asking for presents is common in the East, and is practiced by persons of all ranks. No feeling of shame prevents either the prince or the peasant from requesting to have given him any thing that he sees and covets. A return, however, is made, as a matter of course, for presents received in this way, and, indeed, for all presents, except they be rewards for service or alms.—*Canon Rawlinson*. **Of his royal bounty**—Or, as the margin has it, *gave her according to the hand of King Solomon*. That is, besides giving her the things she asked for, he gave her presents becoming his great wealth. As she had brought him presents of such great value, it was but a matter of kingly courtesy for him to respond by similar gifts.—*Terry*.

Legend has been busy with an account of the tests with which the queen tried the wisdom of Solomon. She had dressed, we are told, five hundred boys as girls, and five hundred girls as boys, and collected one thousand carpets of gold and silver tissue, a crown adorned with pearls and diamonds, and a great quantity of perfumes. All these were sent to Jerusalem, and with them a

13 And king Sol'o-mon gave unto the queen of She'ba all her desire, whatsoever she asked, besides *that* which Sol'o-mon gave her <sup>i</sup> of his royal bounty: so she turned, and went to her own country, she and her servants.

<sup>i</sup> According to the hand of king Solomon.

single pearl, a diamond cut through in zigzags, and a crystal goblet in a box. Her envoy brought also a letter to Solomon, which intimated that, if he were really a prophet, he would tell which were boys and which girls in the train of her ambassadors, guess the contents of the box, pierce the pearl, thread the diamond, and fill the goblet with water which came neither from earth nor heaven. The king told the contents of the letter, we are informed, before it was opened; distinguished the boys from the girls as they washed their hands, the boys only dipping their hands in the water, the girls tucking up their sleeves to their shoulders, and washing their arms as well. By the help of a magic stone he drilled a hole through the pearl at once, and he threaded the diamond by making a worm pass through it with a fine thread in its mouth. The crystal goblet he filled with water gathered from the sweat of a wild horse ridden furiously over the plain.—*C. Geikie*.

### The Visit to the King.

#### I.

I came from very far away, to see  
The King of Salem: for I had been told  
Of glory and of wisdom manifold,  
And condescension infinite and free.  
How could I rest when I had heard his fame  
In that dark lonely land of death from whence I  
came?

#### II.

I came (but not like Sheba's queen) alone!  
No stately train, no costly gifts to bring:  
No friend at court, save One, that One the King  
I had requests to spread before his throne,  
And I had questions none could solve for me,  
Of import deep, and full of awful mystery.

#### III.

I came and communed with that mighty King,  
And told him all my heart; I cannot say  
In mortal ear what communings were they.  
But wouldst thou know, go too, and meekly bring  
All that is in thy heart, and thou shalt hear  
His voice of love and power, his answers sweet and  
clear.

#### IV.

O, happy end of every weary quest!  
He told me all I needed, graciously—  
Enough for guidance and for victory  
O'er doubts and fears, enough for quiet rest;  
And when some veiled response I could not read,  
It was not hid from him—this was enough indeed.

## V.

His wisdom and his glories passed before  
 My wondering eyes in gradual revelation ;  
 The house that he had built, its strong foundation,  
 Its living stones, and, brightening more and more,  
 Fair glimpses of that palace far away,  
 Where all his loyal ones shall dwell with him for aye.

## VI.

True the report that reached my far-off land  
 Of all his wisdom and transcendent fame ;  
 Yet I believed not until I came—  
 Bowed to the dust, till raised by royal hand.  
 The half was never told by mortal word ;  
 My King exceeded all the fame that I had heard !

## VII.

O, happy are his servants ! happy they  
 Who stand continually before his face,  
 Ready to do his will of wisest grace !  
 My King ! is mine such blessedness to-day ?  
 For I too hear thy wisdom, line by line  
 Thy ever-brightening words in holy radiance shine.

## VIII.

O, blessed be the Lord thy God, who set  
 Our King upon his throne ! divine delight  
 In the Beloved, crowning thee with might,  
 Honor, and majesty supreme ; and yet  
 The strange and godlike secret opening thus—  
 The kingship of his Christ ordained through love to us !—*F. R. Haeckel.*

## Authorities to be Consulted.

Geikie's Hours with the Bible, vol. iii, chap. 16. Milman's History of the Jews, vol. i. Stanley's Jewish Church, lecture xxviii. Ewald's History of Israel. Bishop Hall's Contemplations, book xvii. Kitto's Daily Bible Illustrations. See Lesson Helps for 1876. Preacher's Lantern, iv, 181. Freeman's Bible Manners and Customs, 254, 64, 378, 432. Foster's Cyclopaedia, [numbers marked with a star refer to poetical quotations,] ver. 1 : \*1254 ; 1-9 : \*2958, \*4006 ; 4 : 3414 ; 7 : \*3347, \*4007, \*4008.

## Practical Thoughts.

[LESSONS FROM THE QUEEN OF SHEBA.]

1. We see that the knowledge of God imparts a wisdom which gives prominence and honor from the world. Ver. 1.
2. The one enlightened by Divine wisdom can instruct those who come for knowledge. Vers. 2, 3.
3. The service of God leads oftener than the service of sin to prosperity and success. Ver. 5.
4. The companions of those who are wise in Divine truth gain from association with them. Ver. 8.
5. Prosperity and riches are the gift of the Lord, to whom belongs the praise for their possession. Ver. 9.
6. Those who meet with God's people bear away with them more than the gifts which they bring. Ver. 13.

SOLOMON'S SIN.—1 Kings 11. 4-13.

**GOLDEN TEXT.**—Keep thy heart with all diligence ; for out of it are the issues of life.

—Prov. 4. 23.

**TIME.**—B. C. 995, ff.

**PLACES.**—Jerusalem, and the hills round about.

**CONNECTING LINK.**—Solomon's foreign wives. 1 Kings 11. 1-3.

**INTRODUCTION.** *The causes of Solomon's sin.*—The treaty with Hiram of Tyre, which enabled him to execute the intended state buildings in Jerusalem, was followed by allegiances for the establishment of a wide-spread commerce both by sea and land, through which ever-increasing treasures of gold and silver, and other costly goods were brought to the king. As this accumulation of riches helped to nourish his inclination to a love of show, and created a kind of luxury which was hardly reconcilable with the simplicity of manners and the piety of the servant of God, so the foreign trade led to a toleration of heathen customs and religions views which could not fail to detract from the reverence paid to Jehovah, however little the trade with foreigners might be in itself at variance with the nature of the Old Testament kingdom of God. And again, even the great wisdom of King Solomon might also become a rock endangering his life of faith, not only that an excessive thirst for inquiry might easily seduce him from the open and clearer regions of the kingdom of truth into the darker ones of the kingdom of lies—that is, of magic—and so lead him to the paths of superstition ; as because the wide-spread fame of his wisdom brought distinguished and wise men from distant lands to Jerusalem and into alliance with the king, and their homage flattered the vanity of the human heart, and led to a greater and greater

toleration of heathen ways.—*Keil.* *The extent of Solomon's idolatry.*—Various opinions have been held as to the extent and the true nature of Solomon's idolatry. Some (as Augustine) have regarded it as complete apostasy—an apostasy from which there could be no recovery; others (as Ewald) have seen in it nothing but a wise toleration, rather praiseworthy than blamable, misrepresented and misunderstood by the religious zealots of the day. The truth seems to lie between these two extreme views. Solomon did not ever openly or wholly apostatize. He continued his attendance on the worship of Jehovah, and punctually made his offerings three times a year in the temple. 1 Kings 9. 25. But his heart was not "perfect" with God. Many causes had concurred to weaken the religious earnestness of his younger days, as the corrupting influence of wealth and luxury, the canker of sensualism, an increasing worldliness, leading him to adopt more and more a worldly policy, and perhaps a growing latitudinarianism, arising from contact with all the manifold forms of human opinion. His lapse into deadly sin was no doubt gradual. Partly from ostentation, partly from that sensualism which is the most common failing of Oriental monarchs, he establishes a harem on a grand and extraordinary scale; he then admitted among his wives and concubines "strange women," that is, foreigners, either from worldly policy, or for variety's sake; he allowed himself to fall too much under seraglio influence; his wives "turned away his heart." To gratify them he built magnificent temples to their false gods, temples which were the scene of rites cruel and impure; he was not ashamed to build these temples right over against Jerusalem, as manifest rivals to "the temple." He thus became the author of a syncretism, which sought to blend together the worship of Jehovah and the worship of idols—a syncretism which possessed fatal attractions for the Jewish nation. Finally, he appears himself to have frequented the idol temples, (see vers. 5, 10,) and to have taken part in those fearful impurities which constituted the worst horror of the idolatrous systems, thus practically apostatizing, though theoretically he never ceased to hold that Jehovah was the true God.—*Canon Rawlinson.*

4 For it came to pass, when Sol'o-mon was old, <sup>1</sup>that his wives turned away his heart after other gods: and his heart

<sup>1</sup> Deut. 17. 17; Neh. 13. 26.

4. When Solomon was old—It is evident, from Solomon's age at his accession, that he could not have been more than about sixty at his death. "Old," in this place, must therefore mean about fifty or fifty-five.—*Rawlinson.* **His wives turned away his heart**—Although Mosaism, even in the history of creation, represents monogamy as the original relation ordained by God himself, nevertheless polygamy was so deeply rooted in the habits of all peoples that the strict lawgiver was not able to uproot it, but sought, by various limitations, to make it difficult, (Deut. 21. 15, *sq.*; Exod. 21. 9, *sq.*) It was expressly forbidden to a king to have many wives, (Deut. 17. 17,) because the dangers which inhered in polygamy were doubly great, and could become dangerous for the whole realm, as Solomon's example conspicuously shows. Christendom was the first to make holy the bond of matrimony.—*Bahr.* **His heart was not perfect**—Entirely devoted to the Lord, (*cf.* chap. 8. 61,) like the heart of David his father, who had indeed grievously sinned, but had not fallen into idolatry.—*Keil.*

What sight on earth more sad than the disgraceful fall of an old man, whose youth had been devout and promising and his manhood noble? Well did Solon, the Athenian, insist that no man should be counted blessed until he had nobly ended a happy, noble life.—*Terry.*

was not perfect with the LORD his God, as *was* the heart of Da'vid his father.

5 For Sol'o-mon went after <sup>2</sup>Ash'to-

<sup>2</sup> Judges 2. 13.

It is not so much coarse sensuality as rather "psychical bondage to the female sex," which wrought the fall of Solomon. Psychical polygamy dissipates, pulls to pieces, and wastes irresistibly the core of human soul. . . . At a certain stage of "culture," in the intercourse between man and woman, coarse sensuality by no means prevails, but the psychical pleasure in the woman and the psychical abandonment to the woman, the desire of the eye, and the desire of the eye for the sex as such, and not for an individual woman.—*Vilmar.*

5. Went after—This expression is common in the Pentateuch, and always signifies actual idolatry. See Deut. 11. 28; 13. 2; 28. 14, etc.—*Canon Rawlinson.* **Ashtoreth** is the highest of the Phœnician (Sidonian) and Syrian female deities, and a personification of the feminine principle in nature. Her form is differently represented, sometimes with a bull's or woman's head with horns, (crescents,) sometimes as a fish, (symbol of the watery element.) She was specially adored by women; her worship, which is not exactly known, was most probably associated with indecency.—*Bahr.* **The goddess of the Zidonians**—On the tomb of a Phœnician king, discovered in 1855, on the site of Sidon, mention is made of a temple of Astarte there, which the monarch built or restored, and his mother is said to have been a priestess of the

reth the goddess of the Zi-do'ni-ans, and after Mil'com the abomination of the Am'mon-ites.

6 And Sol'o-mon did evil in the sight of the LORD, and <sup>a</sup>went not fully after the LORD, as *did* Da'vid his father.

7 Then <sup>a</sup>did Sol'o-mon build an high place for <sup>a</sup>Che'mosh, the abomination of

<sup>a</sup>Fulfilled not after. Num. 14, 24.—<sup>b</sup>Num. 33, 52.

goddess.—*Canon Rawlinson.* The Zidonians inhabited Phenicia, north of Palestine, on the Mediterranean Sea. **Milcom**—Called also *Molech*, (ver. 7,) and *Moloch*. Amos 5. 26. The fire-god of the Ammonites, an abomination, particularly in that he was worshiped by the offering of human sacrifices.—*Terry.* **The Ammonites**—A people conquered by David, on the border of the Syrian desert, east and north of the Moabites.

6. **Solomon did evil**—The surroundings or relations were singularly fitted to awaken that kind of spiritual condition and to impart nourishment to it. The long peace, broken neither by war nor other calamity, the great wealth, the extensive trade, the abundance, by these means, of all objects of luxury possible, the voluptuous court-life in consequence, every thing conspired to bring about a relaxation; and this was the soil upon which the numerous strange women could carry out their nature without hinderance.—*Bahr.*

7. **A high place**—The altars of idol-worship, from their elevated situation, more generally known as "high places." **For Chemosh**—Chemosh was a sun-god who was worshiped as king of his people and as a god of war, and as such is depicted upon coins with a sword, lance, and shield in his hands, and with two torches by his side.—*Keil.* **Molech or Moloch**, called **Milcom** in verse 5, was known and adored throughout anterior Asia, whose image, according to the rabbins, was made of brass, with the head of an ox, and human arms, in which the children offered were laid.—*Bahr.* **Moab**—A land east of the Dead Sea, conquered by David, and a part of Solomon's dominion. **The hill that is before Jerusalem**—These places of sacrifice Solomon built upon the mountain in front, that is, to the east, of Jerusalem, and, according to the more precise account in 2 Kings 23. 13, to the right, that is to say, on the southern side, of the Mount of Corruption—in other words, upon the southern peak of the Mount of Olives; and, consequently, this peak has been called in Church tradition, from the

Mo'ab, in <sup>a</sup>the hill that is before Je-ru-sa'lem, and for Mo'lech, the abomination of the children of Am'mon.

8 And likewise did he for all his strange wives, which burnt incense, and sacrificed unto their gods.

9 And the LORD was <sup>a</sup>angry with Sol'o-mon, because his heart was turned

<sup>a</sup>Num. 21. 29.—<sup>b</sup>2 Kings 23. 13.—<sup>c</sup>Deut. 7. 3; Psa. 90. 7.

time of Brocardus onward, either *Mons Offensionis*, after the Vulgate rendering, in 2 Kings 23. 13, or *Mons Scandali*, Mount of Offense.—*Keil.*

8. **Likewise did he for all**—He may have erected altars to other idols than the ones here named, but probably the national deities of the Zidonians, Ammonites, and Moabites were sufficient for the religions of all the strange wives; and, in building altars for these three, he made provision for his Edomite and Hittite wives as well as the rest. Certain it is that no mention is anywhere made of Solomon erecting altars to any other gods than these.—*Terry.* **Strange wives**—Women of foreign races. **Which burned incense . . . unto their gods**—From their youth accustomed to their sensuous, more or less unchaste, worship, they were more reluctant to abandon it, as the earnest and severe Jehovah-cultus could not please them.—*Bahr.*

The truth seems to be, Solomon was getting indifferent about religion. He had got into light and worldly society, and the libertinism of his associations was beginning to make its impression upon him. He was beginning to ask, Is not one religion as good as another, so long as each man believes his own in earnest. He began to feel there is a great deal to be said for these different religions. After all, there is nothing certain; and why forbid men the quiet enjoyment of their own opinion? And so he became what men call liberal, and he took idolatry under his patronage. There are few signs in a soul's state more alarming than that of religious indifference, that is, the spirit of thinking all religions equally true—the real meaning of which is, that all religions are equally false.—*F. W. Robertson.*

9, 10. **The Lord was angry**—Divine anger, as presented in the Bible, is no sudden burst of passion, no low and hateful motion of revenge, as human anger often is, and with which, perhaps, too many are ever prone to associate their idea of Divine anger. It is rather the deep, eternal antagonism of holiness to sin, of truth to error, of right to wrong. Our God cannot look upon sin with the least degree of allowance; and how much soever he may love a human soul as

from the LORD God of Is'ra-el, <sup>7</sup> which had appeared unto him twice,

10 And <sup>8</sup> had commanded him concerning this thing, that he should not go after other gods: but he kept not that which the LORD commanded.

11 Wherefore the LORD said unto Sol'o-mon, Forasmuch as this <sup>6</sup> is done of thee, and thou hast not kept my covenant, and my statutes, which I have commanded thee, <sup>9</sup> I will surely rend the

<sup>7</sup> Chap. 3. 5; 9. 2.—<sup>8</sup> Chap. 8. 12; 9. 6.—<sup>6</sup> Is with thee.—  
—<sup>11</sup> Chap. 12. 30.—<sup>12</sup> Exod. 32. 13;

such, if that soul cleaves unto sin it must of necessity place itself along with the sin in enmity toward God, and so become obnoxious to the Divine anger.—*Terry*. The Lord God . . . had appeared unto him twice—The Divine appearance, first at Gibeon, (Lesson III,) and then at Jerusalem, after the dedication of the temple, with the warnings given him on both occasions, had left Solomon inexcusable, and it was proper and necessary that on one who had been so signally favored with the gifts of heaven, but who had grossly abused them, a terrible judgment should fall.—*R. Jamieson*. **Com-manded him**—The emphasis lies upon the fact that God had appeared to him himself for the purpose of warning him, and had not merely caused him to be warned by prophets.—*Keil*.

God keeps account of the gracious visits he makes us, whether we do or no; knows how often he has appeared to us, and for us, and will remember it against us, if we turn from him.—*M. Henry*.

11. The Lord said unto Solomon—Probably by the ministry of Ahijah the Shilonite. Verse 29.—*Terry*. Forasmuch as this is done—It is well worthy of notice that, in this announcement, the oppression of the people by compulsory labor and taxes, or despotism, is not given as the reason of the dividing of the kingdom by Jehovah, and of limiting Solomon's dynasty to dominion over one tribe; but only the sin against Jehovah, the "going after other gods."—*Bahr*. Will rend the kingdom—On Solomon's death the empire won by David fell asunder, and five kingdoms arose from its ruins, Syria becoming independent, upon the north, under Rezin; Israel, or the ten tribes, under Jeroboam, and Judah alone remaining steadfast to the house of David, though its territory included portions of Simeon and Benjamin; and the two dependent kingdoms of Moab and Edom, the former nominally subject to Israel,

kingdom from thee, and will give it to thy servant.

12 Notwithstanding in thy days I will not do it for Da'vid thy father's sake: but I will rend it out of the hand of thy son.

13 Howbeit <sup>10</sup> I will not rend away all the kingdom; but will give one <sup>11</sup> tribe to thy son <sup>12</sup> for Da'vid my servant's sake, and for Je-ru'sa-lem's sake <sup>13</sup> which I have chosen.

<sup>9</sup> Chap. 12. 15; 2 Kings 17. 15, 21.—<sup>10</sup> 2 Sam. 7. 15; Psa. 89. 33; 2 Kings 13. 23.—<sup>13</sup> Deut. 12. 11.

the latter to Judah, but neither submitting, except to strong kings like Jehoshaphat or Jeroboam II. **To thy servant**—That is, "to one of thy subjects." Jeroboam was a person of good position.—*Canon Rawlinson*.

12. For David thy father's sake—Because of David's goodness and of the promises made to him, (2 Sam. 7. 12-16,) two abatements are made from the rigor of the first sentence. (1) The blow is postponed, and is not to fall till after Solomon's death; and, (2) The kingdom is not to be wholly taken from him. Compare, with the first mitigation, the postponement promised to Josiah. 2 Kings 22. 20.—*Canon Rawlinson*.

13. I will give one tribe to thy son—There is some difficulty in understanding why one tribe only is promised to Rehoboam, when he was really to receive the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin. See chap. 12. 21. The truth seems to be that "little Benjamin" was looked upon as absorbed in Judah, so as not to be really a tribe in the same sense as the others. Still, in memory of the fact that the existing tribe of Judah was a double one, the prophet Ahijah tore his garment into twelve parts, and kept back two from Jeroboam. Verses 30 and 31.—*Canon Rawlinson*. For Jerusalem's sake—In this double limitation of the threatened forfeiture of the kingdom there is clearly manifested the goodness of God; not, however, with reference to Solomon, who had forfeited the Divine mercy through his idolatry, but with regard to David and the selection of Jerusalem; that is to say, not from any special preference for David and Jerusalem, but in order that the promise made to David, (2 Sam. 7,) and the choice of Jerusalem as the place where His name should be revealed, which was connected with that promise, might stand immovably as an act of grace, which no sin of men could overturn.—*Keil*.

## Authorities to be Consulted.

Stanley's Jewish Church, lecture xxviii.  
 Maurice's Prophets and Kings, sermon v.  
 Milman's History of the Jews, book vii.  
 Geikie's Hours with the Bible, chap. xvii.  
 Bishop Hall's Contemplations, book vii.  
 Freeman's Bible Manners and Customs, Nos. 183, 301.  
 F. W. Robertson's Sermon on Solomon's Restoration.  
 Foster's Cyclopaedia of Illustrations, ver. 4: 6025, 6094, 6549; 5: 6532; 7: 3144; 8: 12257; 9: 6669.

## Practical Thoughts.

## [LESSONS FROM SOLOMON'S SIN.]

1. Solomon's sin shows the danger of riches and prosperity to cause forgetfulness of God and lead to sin.

2. Solomon's sin shows that learning will never be a substitute for the grace of God.

3. Solomon's sin shows that sensual lusts and passions may lead a soul away from God.

4. Solomon's sin shows that worldly companionships are apt to result in wickedness.

5. Solomon's sin shows that God does not excuse nor overlook the sins of those who enjoy high privileges.

6. Solomon's sin shows that those who stand high in privilege have need of special watchfulness, lest they fall.

## Sermon Outline.

BY REV. DANIEL WISE, D.D.

INTRODUCTION.—Sin never appears more sinful than when it deforms a character once made beautiful by piety and virtue; nor is its guilt ever deeper than when committed by one who once walked both in the light and experience of the truth. Solomon was such a man, trained by a pious father, specially favored by God manifesting himself in two remarkable visions, one at Gibeon (1 Kings 3. 5) and one at Jerusalem, (1 Kings 9, 2-9,) and endowing him with gifts of wisdom and understanding, he assuredly had "no cloke for his sin." Yet he did sin most shamefully. Consider:

1. **What was Solomon's sin?** Several offenses are charged to his account. But his root sin was *disloyalty to God*. "His heart was turned away from the Lord." The word rendered heart in the Old Testament is very significant. It means more than the will, the emotions, and the affections; it reaches down to the depths of one's self-hood out of which thought, feeling, action, flow. See Gen. 6. 5; Prov. 6. 18; Prov. 17. 20. And also Christ's words in Matt. 15. 19: "Out of the heart proceedeth

evil thoughts," etc., which teach that the intellect, the affections, the passions, the actions, derive their moral quality from the heart, or the fundamental self-hood. Hence, when Solomon's heart was loyal his inner and outward life was pure. When his heart became disloyal, when he broke the bond of faith and love, he began to sin.

1. *He gave himself to a sensual life.* Marrying many wives. Ver. 3.

2. *He broke God's positive law by marrying heathen women.* Ver. 1.

3. *He became an idolater.* Ver. 5. And

4. *He acted hypocritically in that he continued to observe the temple rites, as is implied in verse 6, 'he went not fully after the Lord.'* Thus he illustrates the truth, that disloyalty to God is the root of many forms of sin.

II. **What moved Solomon to apostatize from God?** In Solomon's case, as with all others, there must have been both a  *motive*  and a  *reason* . The real cause was the  *motive* , not the  *reason*  by which he justified himself when he took the first step. His reason was only the excuse he offered for taking it at the bar of his conscience. What, then, was his  *motive* ? *It was his desire for pleasure.* Eccles. 2. 1. Flattery, pride, riches, power, had excited and fed evil desires until, after many conflicts, no doubt, he said to his heart, "Go to, now, I will prove thee with mirth, therefore enjoy pleasure." By that deliberate resolve he broke the bond that had bound him to God, and stepped into the "path of the wicked." Thousands have done likewise in every age of the Church. But Solomon gave his conscience a  *reason*  for that resolve. What was it? In Eccles. 2, 3, he tells us that he persuaded himself it was not the pleasures of sin he sought, but to know "what was good for the sons of men." This, like all the reasons by which men justify sin, was simply self-delusion. He was a wise man thinking and reasoning like a fool, because the mists of his growing lusts were blinding his eyes.

III. **The consequences of Solomon's sin.** These, as in all similar cases, were manifold and very serious.

1. *On himself.* (a) His conscience ceased to be at peace because of God's anger. Ver. 9. (b) The quiet of his reign was disturbed by several adversaries. Vers. 14, 23, 26.

2. *On his kingdom.* It led to a division of his kingdom after his death. Thus showing that all human sin affects three parties: (a) It offends God, (b) It hurts the sinner himself. (c) It works ill to others.

IV. **The lesson from Solomon's sin is the Golden Text.** "Keep thy heart," etc. If the heart be kept bound closely to God by the tie of loyalty, right feeling and action will follow. The fountain being kept pure, its issue will be a pure life and a crown of glory.

B. C. 990.]

LESSON VIII.

[Nov. 23.

PROVERBS OF SOLOMON.—Prov. 1. 1-16.

GOLDEN TEXT.—The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge.—PROV. 1. 7.

TIME.—B. C. 990.

INTRODUCTION.—The Book of Proverbs was probably written in the interval between the fifteenth and thirtieth years of Solomon's reign; certainly it was composed before he had been beguiled by his strange wives into idolatry in his old age.—*Wordsworth*. The long exhortation, characterized by the frequent recurrence of the words "my son," which extends over the first nine chapters, is obviously of the nature of a preface to the collection of the "Proverbs of Solomon," which begins in ch. 10. 1. Vers. 1-6 are as the title-page to the whole work, setting forth its scope and nature; verse 7 as the motto, indicating the one great truth of which every precept in the book is either a reproduction or an application.—*Plumptre*. Other proverbs are like the gatherings up of the wisdom of a nation, in short, pithy, sentences, which are the results of human experience or the utterances of human wisdom, caught up and adopted by national consent, and put in circulation by the national will, as the oral currency of national intelligence. But the Proverbs of Solomon are from a higher source. They are coined in another mint. They are not of the earth, earthy; but they come down from heaven. They are emanations from the pure well-spring of Divine intelligence. If we may venture to adopt another figure—other proverbs are *Jacula prudentum*; but Solomon's Proverbs are shafts taken out of God's own quiver, and discharged from the Divine bow. Or, to use Solomon's own comparison, they are as goads handled and as nails fastened by "masters of assemblies," and they are all given forth from the hand of "one Shepherd"—even the Divine Shepherd himself. The Proverbs of Solomon came from above, and they also look upward. They teach that all true wisdom is the gift of God, and is grounded on the fear of the Lord. They dwell with the strongest emphasis on the necessity of careful vigilance over the heart, which is manifest only to God; and on the right government of the tongue, whose sins are rarely punished by human laws; and on the duty of acting, in all the daily business and social intercourse of life, with an eye steadily fixed on the throne of God, and with habitual reference to the only unerring standard of human practice—his Will and Word.—*Wordsworth*.

1 The <sup>1</sup>Proverbs of Sol'o-mon the son of Da'vid, king of Is'ra-el;

2 To know wisdom and instruction; to perceive the words of understanding;

† 1 Kings

4. 32.

1. The Proverbs—A *proverb* is a sententious maxim, or a short, comprehensive, and weighty saying, expressed frequently, but not always, in metaphorical language; or the terms are employed in an unusual and peculiar sense, and are, therefore, more or less obscure, requiring some effort of the mind to apprehend them. This seeming disadvantage is compensated by the stronger impression following such mental effort; and, consequently, by an easier and more perfect retention in the memory.—*W. Hunter*. Of Solomon—Here is a marvel; not a line of Solomon's writings tends to palliate Solomon's sins. How do you account for this? The errors and follies were his own; they were evil. But out of them the All-wise has brought good. The glaring imperfections of the man's life have been used as a dark ground to set off the luster of that pure righteousness which the Spirit has spoken by his lips.—*Arnot*. The son of David—David, whose life was full of troubles, wrote a book of devotion, for, *Is any afflicted? Let him pray*. Solomon, who lived quietly, wrote a book of in-

struction, for when the Churches had rest, they were edified. In times of peace we should learn ourselves and teach others that which, in troublous times, both they and we must practice.—*Heurg*.

The Book of Proverbs does not, as the simple suppose, contain mere plain precepts; but as gold is to be sought for in the earth, and the kernel lurks in the nut, and chestnuts are inclosed in shaggy husk, so in this book the hidden fruit is to be searched for, and the Divine sense to be diligently explored.—*Jerome*.

Like those concentrated essences of food which explorers carry in their knapsacks, the proverb may not present to the eye the appearance of the wisdom that it was originally made of; but a great quantity of the raw material has been used up in making one, and that one, when skillfully dissolved, will spread out to its original dimensions. Much matter is pressed into little room, that it may keep and carry.—*Arnot*.

2. To know—As in the first verse we have the title of the book, so in this and the following verses, to the sixth, we have its design or



3 To receive the instruction of wisdom, justice and judgment, and equity;

4 To give subtilty to the simple, to the young man knowledge and discretion.

Chap. 1. 1. — Equities.

object stated and explained. The purpose is disciplinary, educational; first, with respect to the *young man*, and then to him that is already *wise*, instructed.—*W. Hunter*. **To know wisdom**—This passes on into a personification. The power by which human personality reaches its highest spiritual perfection, by which all lower elements are brought into harmony with the highest, can hardly be thought of as other than itself personal, life-giving, creative.—*Plumptre*. **Instruction**—That is, discipline or training, the practical complement of the more speculative wisdom.—*Plumptre*. **Understanding**—The power of distinguishing, discerning right from wrong, truth from its counterfeit.—*Plumptre*.

3. **To receive the instructions**—The whole may be paraphrased thus: The design of my instructions is to enable you to acquire an intelligent discipline, or habit of prudence, in your personal conduct, of morality in your social and civil relations, and of rectitude in all things.—*W. Hunter*. **Wisdom**—Not the same word as in ver. 2, and better expressed, perhaps, by *thoughtfulness*, so leading naturally to words which are yet more decidedly ethical.—*Plumptre*. **Justice**—The English word is perhaps somewhat too narrow in its received meaning for the Hebrew, which includes the ideas of truth and beneficence. *Righteousness* would be a better equivalent. **And judgment**—A word of comprehensive meaning, including all distinction, regulation, ordering, right, custom. It seems to have special reference to administrative justice, or doing right in official capacity, never trespassing upon the rights of others, but preserving and defending them.—*W. Hunter*. **Equity**—In the Hebrew, as the marginal reading shows, the plural is used, and so expresses the many varying forms and phases of the one pervading principle.—*Plumptre*.

4. **To give**—Subtily, expertness, shrewdness, to train them to mental activity and acumen.—*W. Hunter*. **To the simple**—Properly the open-hearted, that is, one whose heart stands open to every influence from another, the harmless, good-natured.—*Delitzsch*. **To the young man**—The *young*, those whose age places them for the most part under the category of the "open," and who, even if their will be stronger,

5 A wise man will hear, and will increase learning; and a man of understanding shall attain unto wise counsels;

6 To understand a proverb, and the

Or, advisement.—Or, an eloquent speech.

still need both knowledge and discipline.—*Plumptre*. Doubtless, Solomon's son, Rehoboam, was in his mind when he wrote the Book of Proverbs, and it was designed primarily for his benefit. There are many passages in it which specially refer to him. Rehoboam was an infant when Solomon came to the throne; and he was rather more than forty years of age when he succeeded Solomon his father.—*Wordsworth*. **Discretion**—Or *discernment*, which sets a man on his guard, and keeps him from being duped by false advisers. These the teacher offers, to save the simple and the young from the slower and more painful process of gaining them by a bitter experience.—*Plumptre*.

5. **The wise man will hear**—This book will not only make the foolish and bad wise and good, but the wise and good wiser and better; and though the simple and the young man may perhaps slight those instructions, and not be the better for them, yet the *wise man will hear*; wisdom will be justified by her own children, though not by the children sitting in the market-place.—*Henry*. **Will increase learning**—The simplest assertion of high moral truths may add something even to the wisdom of the wise.—*Plumptre*. **Attain unto wise counsels**—The term rendered *wise counsels* (steermanship, or capability to guide) is somewhat obscure, and has given the critics trouble. The general sense of the verse seems to be an expression of confidence that this class of persons will, by means of his instructions, increase in their acquisitions, and so succeed in their ardent and deliberate pursuit of useful knowledge as to obtain the power to *steer their course* safely through life.—*W. Hunter*.

6. **To understand a proverb**—These proverbs are not merely to be learned by rote; they are to form a habit of mind. To gain through them the power of entering into the deeper meaning of other proverbs, whether in their simpler form, or more enigmatic and obscure, is the end kept in view, just as our Lord's teaching in Matt. 13 was designed to educate the disciples to "know all parables." Mark 4. 13.—*Plumptre*. **And the interpretation**—The rendering *interpretation* spoils the parallelism of the two clauses, and fails to express the Hebrew.

interpretation; the words of the wise, and their dark sayings.

7 The fear of the Lord *is* <sup>d</sup> the beginning of knowledge; *but* fools despise wisdom and instruction.

8 My son, hear the instruction of thy

<sup>d</sup> Or, the principal part.—<sup>e</sup> An adding.

In Heb. 2. 6, the only other passage in which this word occurs, it is rendered "taunting proverb." Here "riddle" or "enigma" would better express the meaning.—*Plumptre*.

7. **The fear of the Lord**—This, "the fear of the Lord," as has been said, comes as the motto of the book. The beginning of wisdom is not found in keen insight, nor wide experience, nor the learning of the schools, but in the temper of reverence and awe. The fear of the finite in the presence of the Infinite, of the sinful in the presence of the Holy, self-abhorring, adoring, as in Job's confession (42. 5, 6,) this for the Israelite was the starting-point of all true wisdom.—*Plumptre*. **The Lord**—*Jehovah*—is the name commonly applied to the Divine Being in this book; seldom *Elohim*—God.—*W. Hunter*. **Beginning of knowledge . . . fools despise wisdom**—"Knowledge" and "wisdom" are not distinguished here: at least they are not contrasted. Both terms may be employed to designate the same thing; but when they are placed in antithesis, wisdom is the nobler of the two. Knowledge may be possessed in large measure by one who is destitute of wisdom, and who consequently does no good by his attainments, either to himself or to his neighbors. A lucid definition of both, in their specific and distinct applications, is embodied in a proverb of this book, 15. 2, "The tongue of the wise useth knowledge aright." The two terms taken together indicate, in this text, the best knowledge wisely used for the highest ends.—*Arnot*.

The knowledge of God is the root of knowledge. When branches are cut from a tree and laid on the ground at a certain season, they retain for a time a portion of their sap. I have seen such branches, when the spring came round, pushing forth buds like their neighbors. But very soon the slender stock of sap was exhausted, and as there was no connection with a root, so as to procure a new supply, the buds withered away. How unlike the buds that spring from the branches growing in the living root.—*Arnot*.

8. **My son**—He personates a father, and addresses every reader as a son in affection. The formula occurs frequently in the first nine chapters, and is supposed by some to indicate

father, and forsake not the law of thy mother:

9 For they *shall be* <sup>e</sup> an ornament of grace unto thy head, and chains about thy neck.

10 My son, if sinners entice thee, <sup>3</sup> consent thou not.

<sup>3</sup> Genesis 39. 7; Ephesians 5. 11.

the beginning of a new section. But this is not certain. **Hear the instruction of thy father**—Parents are the natural instructors of their children. Where they cannot instruct them themselves, they employ teachers as substitutes. Hence the maxim that the teacher is in *loco parentis*, in the place of the parent.—*W. Hunter*. **Forsake not the law of thy mother**—It has been justly observed that heathen moralists and legislators have magnified the authority of the father, giving him sometimes absolute power, but have made little of the mother. The Divine morality teaches us to honor both father and mother.—*W. Hunter*.

9. **An ornament . . . unto thy head**—To the Israelite's mind no signs or badges of joy or glory were higher in worth than the garland round the head, the gold chain round the neck, worn by kings and the favorites of kings. Gen. 41. 42; Dan. 5. 29.—*Plumptre*. **Chains about thy neck**—Chains worn about the neck were an ornament common to both men and women. Thus Pharaoh is said to have put a chain of gold about Joseph's neck, (Gen. 41. 42,) and Belshazzar did the same to Daniel. Dan. 5. 29. They are mentioned as part of the Midianitish spoil. Num. 31. 50. In some cases they were badges of honor or of office.—*W. Hunter*. By the *neck* is shown stiffness and stubbornness (Exod. 32. 9) and pride and immodesty, (Isa. 3. 16;) and by the *neck* also is shown subjection and obedience; and to *bind* God's law as a *chain about the neck*, and to wear it as an ornament, is to show ready compliance with it and joyful cheerfulness in doing it, "to make the hardest task the best delight."—*Wordsworth*.

10. **If sinners entice thee**—The first great danger which besets the simple and the young is that of evil companionship. The only safety is to be found in the power of saying "No" to all such invitations, however enticing they may be.—*Plumptre*. **Consent thou not**—It is a blunt, peremptory command. Your method of defense must be different from the adversary's mode of attack. His strength lies in making gradual approaches; yours in a resistance, sudden, resolute, total.—*Arnot*.

11 If they say, Come with us, let us lay wait for blood, let us lurk privily for the innocent without cause:

12 Let us swallow them up alive as the grave; and whole, as those that go down into the pit:

13 We shall find all precious sub-

\* Jer. 5. 26.—\* Psa. 28. 1.

**11. Let us lay wait for blood**—The temptation against which the teacher seeks to guard his disciple is that of joining a band of highway robbers. At no period in its history has Palestine ever risen to the security of a well-ordered police system; and the wild license of the marauder's life attracted, we may well believe, many who were brought up in towns. The "vain men" who gathered round Jephthah, (Judg. 11. 3,) the lawless or discontented who came to David in Adullam, (1 Sam. 22. 2,) the bands of robbers who infested every part of the country in the period of the New Testament, and against whom every Roman governor had to wage incessant war, show how deeply rooted the evil was there. The history of many countries (England, for example, in the popular traditions of Robin Hood and of Henry V.) presents like phenomena. The robber-life has attractions for the open-hearted and adventurous. No generation, perhaps no class, can afford to despise the warning against it.—*Plumptre*. **Lurk privily for the innocent**—Words which, as St. Augustine remarks, reached the climax of their savage and sanguinary significance in the combination of the Jews against the Holy One, whom they hated *without cause*, (John 15. 25,) and in the covetousness of Judas, who confessed his sin with bitter remorse, saying, "I have betrayed the *innocent blood*." Matt. 27. 4. The words *without cause* may be combined with *innocent*, so as to signify one who is innocent to no purpose, although he imagines that his innocence will protect him.—*Wordsworth*.

**12. Let us swallow them . . . as the grave**—The heart of the evil-doers becomes bolder: "We will be as *sheol*, as *hades*, as the great under-world of the dead, all-devouring, merciless. The destruction of those we attack shall be as sudden as that of those who go down quickly into *sheol*," Num. 16. 30, 33.—*Plumptre*. "Like hell," *hades*, *oreus*, the under-world, a favorite expression of bloodthirsty men in all ages. The strong passions excited by even regular warfare in a good cause afford a temptation to, and, we are sorry to say, often an excuse for,

stance, we shall fill our houses with spoil:

14 Cast in thy lot among us; let us all have one purse:

15 My son, walk not thou in the way with them; refrain thy foot from their path:

16 For their feet run to evil, and make haste to shed blood:

\* Chap. 4. 14.—\* Isa. 59. 7.

shocking profanity. This is a prominent vice of military men; but it should be left to those who fight in a bad cause and for bad ends. The men here represented are as voracious as the grave.—*W. Hunter*. **And whole**—We may render the latter clause, *and upright men as those that go down to the pit*. **Into the pit**—Pit, as here used, is of course a synonym for *sheol*, the great cavernous depth, the shadow-world of the dead.—*Plumptre*.

**13, 14. We shall find all precious substance**—As the husbandmen, who typified the Jews, said, "This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and the inheritance shall be ours." Mark 12. 7.—*Bede*. **Let us all have one purse**—The oneness of the purse consists in this, that the booty which each of them gets belongs not wholly or chiefly to him, but to the whole together, and is disposed of by lot; so that, as far as possible, he who participated not at all in the affair in obtaining it may yet draw the greatest prize.—*Delitzsch*. The main attraction of the robber-life is its wild communism, the sense of equal hazards and equal hopes.—*Plumptre*.

**15, 16. Walk not thou in the way with them**—The two diverse ways of God and the world—of the righteous and of sinners—and the two diverse ends of those two ways, are the subject of both prologues, that of the Psalms (Psa. 1 and 2) and of the Proverbs, Chaps. 1-9. The former prologue is expanded in the latter, and branches out into the following chapters, 10-24, which form the main body of this book.—*Wordsworth*. **Refrain thy foot**—The only way to escape the end of the sinner's path is to hold back the foot from its beginning, and avoid the first step. **Run to evil**—See how constantly the moral element of life is presented as a motive in God's word. We are to avoid sin, not merely because it is unwise or unprofitable, but mainly because it is *evil*.

#### Authorities to be Consulted.

See the authorities on the life of Solomon, Lessons III, VI, VII. Arnot's Laws from Heaven for Life on Earth, chaps. i-iv. Kitto's

Daily Bible Illustrations, 10th week. Geikie's *Flours with the Bible*, chap. xviii. Freeman's *Bible Manners and Customs*. Foster's *Cyclopedia of Illustrations*, [numbers marked with a star refer to poetical quotations,] ver. 1: 10623; 2-4: 11260; 4: \*885, 12322; 5: \*1039, 1116, 10191; 6: 4774; 7: 4179, 8519; 8: 4038, 8670, 9864; 9: 1736, 6342; 10: 110, 1117, 8467.

Practical Thoughts.

[TRUE KNOWLEDGE.]

1. True knowledge can only be gained through instruction from one who has experience and wisdom. Ver. 2.
2. True knowledge has relation to character

as well as culture, to morals as well as mind. Vers. 3, 4.

3. True knowledge will always be appreciated by those who are already possessed of it and are truly wise. Ver. 5.

4. True knowledge has its basis in a reverence for God and respect for his law. Ver. 7.

5. True knowledge will teach us to honor our parents and heed their instructions. Vers. 8, 9.

6. True knowledge will give grace and beauty, better than ornaments of worldly wealth. Ver. 9.

7. True knowledge will teach us to avoid evil companionships and unjust dealings. Vers. 10-16.

B. C. 990.]

LESSON IX.

[Nov. 30.]

TRUE WISDOM.—Prov. 8. 1-17.

**GOLDEN TEXT.**—I love them that love me; and those that seek me early shall find me.

—Prov. 8. 17.

TIME.—B. C. 990.

INTRODUCTION.—In striking contrast with the solicitations of sinful pleasure, presented in the last chapter under the type of an alluring, but dissolute, woman, the instructor now presents the strongest motives to the pursuit and acquisition of wisdom, which he again personifies and represents under the character of a pure, lovely, benevolent, discreet, and affectionate woman, who earnestly seeks, by all suitable means, to attract to herself the sincere affection of human hearts for a high and noble object—that of conferring all manner of good. Unlike the base character of the preceding chapter, she seeks no covert of darkness and secrecy, but gives her invitations publicly, and in the most frequented places, expostulating with the erring, and setting forth the value of the instruction he imparts, both because of its own intrinsic worth and of the heavenly source whence it emanates.—*W. Hunter*. We should be taking a very low, unworthy, and inadequate view of the present and following magnificent and sublime chapters, and should be defrauding ourselves of the Divine instruction and heavenly comfort and joy, which the divine Author of them designed to impart by their means to us, and we should be abandoning the high and holy ground taken by all the ancient Christian expositors in interpreting these chapters, if we were to limit our estimate of wisdom, as here described, to mere practical prudence in earthly things, and if we did not rise to loftier ground, and behold Him who is essential wisdom, the co-eternal Son of God, and recognize here a representation of his attributes and prerogatives.—*Wordsworth*.

1 Doth not wisdom cry? and

understanding put forth her voice?

† Chap. 9. 3; 1 Cor.

1 24; Col. 2. 3.

1. **Doth not wisdom cry**—*Call aloud*. The negative form of the question implies an affirmative answer. It is a forcible way of saying that she does these things.—*W. Hunter*. It is not necessary to inquire whether the wisdom that cries here be an attribute of God, or the person of Emmanuel. We may safely take it for both, or either. The wisdom of God is manifested in Christ, and Christ is the wisdom of God manifested.—*Arnot*. Is it not true that the Lord himself, who is the true wisdom, "hath spoken plainly to the world, and in secret hath said

nothing?" John 18. 20. He preached on the mount to his disciples, he spake openly to the multitudes in the temple, and in places of public resort.—*Wordsworth*.

In the *Memorabilia of Xenophon* (ii, 1, 21) we have a beautiful picture, drawn with exquisite skill, of *Virtue* and *Vice* (who calls herself Happiness) presenting themselves to the youthful Heracles, at the time of his entrance into active life, and pleading their respective claims to his allegiance.—*Wordsworth*.

2 She standeth in the top of high places, by the way in the places of the paths;

3 She crieth at the gates, at the entry of the city, at the coming in at the doors:

4 Unto you, O men, I call; and my voice is to the sons of man.

5 O ye simple, understand wisdom; and, ye fools, be ye of an understanding heart.

6 Hear; for I will speak of <sup>2</sup> excellent

<sup>2</sup> Chap. 22, 29. — <sup>3</sup> John 8, 14; Rom. 15, 8.

2. She standeth in the top of high places—The idea conveyed is that of entire and sought-for publicity, as one who has an important public message to deliver—important to all.—W. Hunter. The adulterous woman spake in secret, the oracles of the heathen muttered, but wisdom speaks openly; truth seeks no corners, but gladly appeals to the light. *Henry.*

3. She crieth at the gates—Literally, *She crieth at the head of the gates, at the mouth of the city*, as well as *at the head of high places by the way*. The diction is highly poetical, it personifies inanimate things, and gives them a living existence and physical organs, a *head*, a *mouth*, a *hand*, and thus prepares us for the noble flight of prophetic imagination which ensues.—*Wordsworth*. At the coming in at the doors—Openings, gate-ways, and might be applied to avenues or other openings, but there is no example of such application. The general idea is, that she makes her proclamation at all places of public resort. "At the entrance of the avenues."—*Stuart*. Persons desirous of proclaiming intelligence of great interest sought places where they could be most distinctly and most widely heard. Isa. 40, 9; 52, 7, 8; Luke 12, 3.—W. Hunter.

4. Men . . . sons of man—The two words are used which, like *viri* and *homines*, describe the higher and the lower, the stronger and the weaker.—*Plumptre*. I call . . . my voice—God's message is to all mankind, and the voice of the Gospel, the highest wisdom, is not limited to any one class or people.

5. Ye simple, . . . ye fools—(See note, Lesson VIII, ver. 4.) These terms in our version may be unnecessarily strong. The original would justify *inexperienced*, *unsuspecting*, those without culture, untaught and rude, and therefore unprepared for the strategy of the enemy.—W. Hunter. Understand wisdom—See notes in Lesson VIII, vers. 2, 3, 7. Of an understanding heart—Literally, *understand the*

things; and the opening of my lips *shall be right things*.

7 For my mouth shall <sup>3</sup> speak truth; and wickedness is <sup>a</sup> an abomination to my lips.

8 All the words of my mouth are in righteousness; *there is nothing* <sup>b</sup> forward or perverse in them.

9 They are all plain to him that understandeth, and right to them that find knowledge.

<sup>a</sup> The abomination of my lips. — <sup>b</sup> Wretched

*heart*. Comp. chap. 15, 32; 17, 16, in the Hebrew. *Heart* is to be taken tropically for discretion, prudence, self-government, power to control the appetites.—W. Hunter. Learn shrewdness, ye simple; and fools, be wise in heart.—*Conant*.

6. I will speak of excellent things—Literally, "princely things." The word is not the same as that translated "excellent" in ch. 22, 29, and is elsewhere always used of persons, as in 1 Sam. 9, 16; 2 Sam. 5, 2. It is characteristic of the highly poetic style of this part of the book that it should be used here either of the things taught, or, as if adverbially, of the character of the teaching.—*Plumptre*. Right things—*Straight*, the opposite of every thing tortuous, disingenuous, dishonest.—W. Hunter.

7, 8. My mouth shall speak—More literally, *my palate meditates truth*; only that which is true. *Mouth*, or *palate*, means the inner part of the mouth, the seat of taste, often used for the mouth as the organ of taste and speech. Job 31, 39; Sol. Song 5, 16.—W. Hunter. The language implies rather the inward molding of the word; the reflective consideration that precedes speech.—*Zockler*. Wickedness is an abomination—True wisdom, in all its inquiries, never disregards moral relations; and by it evil is never placed upon an equality with good. All the words of my mouth are in righteousness—The words of the ideal wisdom find their highest fulfillment in that of the incarnate Word. There also gracious words proceeded out of his mouth, (Luke 4, 22;) in him wisdom was justified of all her children, (Matt. 11, 19;) just as here she declares that "her ways are plain," not to the perverse and careless, but "to him that understandeth."—*Plumptre*.

9, 10. Plain to him that understandeth—However obscure these teachings may be to the untaught, gross, and sensual, they will be readily apprehended by well-disposed and disciplined minds.—W. Hunter. Knowledge rather than

10 Receive my instruction, and not silver; and knowledge rather than choice gold.

11 For <sup>4</sup>wisdom is better than rubies; and all the things that may be desired are not to be compared to it.

<sup>4</sup> Job, 28. 15; Psa. 19. 10—<sup>c</sup> Or, subtilty.

**choice gold**—The love of money is a root of evil against which the Bible mercifully deals many a blow. There lies one of our deepest sores; thanks be to God for touching it with "line upon line" of his healing word. When a man is pursuing a favorite object with his whole heart, it is irksome to hear a warmer's word continually dropping on his unwilling ear, telling that the choice is foolish.—*Arnot*.

**11. Wisdom is better than rubies**—Suggested by Bochart, Hartmann, Bohlen, and most of the rabbis, to signify *pearls*; and if this be the true meaning, we may compare our Lord's words concerning "the *pearl* of great price." Matt. 13. 46.—*Wordsworth*. It will bring us in a better price, be to us a better portion, show it forth and it will be a better ornament, than jewels and precious stones of the greatest value.—*Henry*. **Things that may be desired**—All desirable things. Comp. ver. 19. Wisdom had begun to specify silver, gold, pearls, but cuts the matter short by including all valuable and desirable things. Her teachings are more valuable than all else. Comp. 3. 15.—*W. Hunter*.

A ship bearing a hundred emigrants has been driven from her course, and wrecked on a desert island far from the tracks of men. The passengers get safe ashore with all their stores. They know not a way of escape; but they possess the means of subsistence. An ocean unvisited by ordinary voyagers circles round their prison, but they have seed, with a rich soil to receive and a genial climate to ripen it. Ere any plan has been laid, or any operation begun, an exploring party returns to head-quarters reporting the discovery of a gold mine; thither instantly the whole company resort to dig. They labor successfully day by day, and month after month; they acquire and accumulate heaps of gold. The people are quickly becoming rich; but the spring is past, and not a field has been cleared, not a grain of seed committed to the ground. The summer comes, and their wealth increases, but the store of food is small. In harvest they begin to discover that their heaps of gold are worthless. A cartload of it cannot satisfy a hungry child. When famine stares them in the face a suspicion shoots across their fainting hearts that the gold has cheated them; and they begin to loathe the bright betrayer. They rush to the woods, fell the trees, dig out the roots, till the ground, and sow the seed. Alas! it is too late.

12 I wisdom dwell with <sup>c</sup>prudence, and find out knowledge of witty inventions.

13 The <sup>5</sup>fear of the LORD is to hate evil: pride, <sup>6</sup>and arrogancy, and the evil way, and <sup>7</sup>the froward mouth, do I hate.

<sup>5</sup> Chap. 16. 6.—<sup>6</sup> Chap. 6. 17.—<sup>7</sup> Chap. 4. 24.

Winter has come, and their seed rots in the soil. They die of want in the midst of their treasures.—*Arnot*.

**12. I wisdom dwell with prudence**—Wisdom inhabits prudence, has settled down, as it were, and taken up her residence in it, is at home in its whole sphere, and rules it.—*Delitzsch*. **Prudence**—Prudence here denotes right knowledge in special cases, in contrast with the more comprehensive idea of intelligence in general—the practical realization of the higher principle of knowledge found in wisdom.—*Elster*. Wisdom, high and lofty, occupied with things heavenly and eternal, does not exclude, yea, rather "dwells with" the practical tact and insight needed for the life of common men.—*Plumptre*. **Find out knowledge of witty inventions**—"Witty inventions." *Counsels* would, perhaps, express better than any other word the truth intended, that all special rules for the details of life spring out of the highest Wisdom as their source.—*Plumptre*.

Christ found out the knowledge of that great invention, and a costly one it was to him, man's salvation, by his satisfaction, an admirable expedient; we had found out many inventions for our ruin, he found out one for our recovery.—*Henry*.

**13. The fear of the Lord**—See notes, Lesson VIII, verse 7. **Is to hate evil**—That is, true piety, or true religion, produces a hatred of all evil. This is its essence. Certain forms of evil are then specified.—*W. Hunter*. **Pride and arrogancy**—The virtue of all virtues is humility; therefore Wisdom hates, above all, self-exaltation in all its forms.—*Delitzsch*. **And the froward mouth**—All perverse and perverting speech. These four appellations seem to cover the feelings, thoughts, words, and actions. The man of piety, the votary of divine Wisdom, must, like her, hate all manner of evil, and, consequently, love and practice all manner of good.—*W. Hunter*.

To fear retribution is not to hate sin; in most cases it is to love it with the whole heart. It is a solemn suggestion that even the religion of dark, unrenewed men is, in its essence, a love of their own sins. Instead of hating sin themselves their

14 Counsel is mine, and sound wisdom: I am understanding; \* I have strength.

15 By ° me kings reign, and princes decree justice.

\* Eccles. 7, 19.—° Dan. 2, 21; 7, 14; Matt. 28, 18., Rom.

grand regret is that God hates it. If they could be convinced that the Judge would regard it as lightly as the culprit, the fear would collapse like steam under cold water, and all the religious machinery which it drove would stand still.—*Arnot.*

14. Counsel is mine—Perhaps the following more nearly expresses it. Stability and reality belong to me; that is, I teach that which is durable and real. The latter clause Stuart renders, "As for me, my might is understanding;" that is, with me understanding is strength; Bacon's maxim, "Knowledge is power."—*W. Hunter.*

15, 16. By me kings reign—Kings themselves sit not fast on their thrones, though placed there by God himself, unless they be ruled by me. In vain do their great captains and other ministers endeavor to defend them, but under the conduct and protection of my discipline.—*Bishop Patrick.* This wisdom, the essential wisdom of God, is here none other than Christ. These words were uttered by Christ before he was in the flesh; but they are no less as good gospel as if they had been recorded by any of the four evangelists; they are gospel before any gospel of them all. Thus much for the author of the speech.—*Bishop Andrews.* By me princes rule—If rulers would rule well—prosperously and permanently—they must rule in accordance with the dictates of wisdom, which means not low cunning, political strategy, unprincipled management, party trickery, and official fraud; but high, honorable, and just aims and actions, in accordance with the principles of righteousness and truth.—*W. Hunter.*

17. I love them that love me—In this life each man finds what he strives to find. Those who aim for knowledge find knowledge eager to meet them; those who seek for God find God seeking for them; those whose thought is of riches see opportunities for wealth beckoning to them from every hill-top, however it may afterward elude their grasp. Seek me early—Or, speedily, earnestly. As though Wisdom had

16 By me princes rule, and nobles, even all the judges of the earth.

17 I ° love them that love me; and ° those that seek me early shall find me.

13, 1.—° 1 Sam. 7, 30; John 14, 21.—° James 1, 5.

said, Seeing that my favor and guidance are essential to real success, especially to those in high places, this one thing is necessary to the obtaining them, namely, to love me, to seek me, speedily and earnestly.—*W. Hunter.*

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#### Practical Thoughts.

[CHRIST AS THE SOURCE OF WISDOM.]

1. Christ, as the living word of wisdom, extends his invitation to all the sons of men. Vers. 1-4.
2. Christ gives his wisdom to the willing and open-hearted who are conscious of need and ready to receive light. Ver. 5.
3. Christ offers to men wisdom of princely worth, and in the way of truth. Vers. 6, 7.
4. Christ gives a wisdom which is pure and righteous, without the alloy of knowledge of evil. Ver. 8.
5. Christ's words are plain to those whose hearts are right, though dark to those without the fellowship of God. Ver. 9.
6. Christ's wisdom is more precious than all the gains of earth. Ver. 10, 11.
7. Christ offers a wisdom which is of value in the practical details of life. Ver. 12.
8. Christ's wisdom may be obtained by all who are in earnest to secure it.

B. C. 990.]

LESSON X.

[Dec. 7,

DRUNKENNESS.—Prov. 23. 29-35.

GOLDEN TEXT.—Be not among wine-bibbers.—PROV. 23. 20.

TIME.—B. C. 990.

INTRODUCTION.—This remarkable description would prove, although it stood alone, that ancient brewers contrived to manufacture liquors of power sufficient to produce and sustain full-grown drunkenness, and that ancient drunkards contrived to make themselves thorough sots upon such drinks as they had. If the malady in its more advanced stages had not existed, this description would not have been written and could not have been understood. There may have been, and there certainly were, differences between ancient and modern times, as there are now between vine-growing and grain-growing countries, both as to the power of the draughts used and the proportion of inebriates to the population; but specimens of intoxicating drink and intoxicated men were not wanting in Solomon's kingdom in Solomon's day.—*Arnot*.

29 Who<sup>1</sup> hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions? who hath babbling? who hath wounds without cause? who hath redness of eyes?

<sup>1</sup> Chap. 20. 1; Isa.

29. Who hath woe—The words corresponding to the two substantives are, strictly speaking, interjections. "Who hath *oh*, who hath *ah*," a word not found elsewhere, but probably an interjection, expressing distress. The sharp touch of the satirist reproduces the actual inarticulate utterance of drunkenness.—*Pomptre*. Who hath contentions—When the wine is in, the wit is out, and the passions up; and thence come drunken scuffles, and drunken disputes over the cups.—*Henry*. Nearly all the murders and brawls are caused by liquor, and more than half of them take place in liquor saloons. Babbling—Listen to his talk, meaningless, driveling, and about matters of which he knows nothing.—*D. A. Wheldon*. Wounds without cause—The wounds which men receive in defense of their country and its just rights are their honor, but wounds without cause received in service of their lusts are marks of their infamy.—*Henry*. Redness of eyes—Blood-shot, blurred, or bleared eyes, Gen. 49. 12. Literally, *darkness* or *obscurity* of eyes. It may perhaps refer to the obscurity of vision produced by intoxication.—*W. Hunter*.

30. Tarry long at the wine—Compare Isa. 3. 11; Job 1. 4; 28. 9. The goodness of the wine of Candia renders the Candiots great drinkers, and it often happens that two or three such will sit down together at the foot of a cask from whence they will not depart till they have emptied it.—*Cabinet's Fragments*, 199. They that go to seek—There is a touch of sarcasm

30 They that tarry long at the wine; they that go to seek mixed wine.

31 Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour

5. 11; Eph. 5. 18.

in "go to seek." The word elsewhere used of diligent search after knowledge (Job 11. 7; Psa. 138. 1; Prov. 25. 2) is here used, as if ironically of the investigations of connoisseurs in wine meeting to test its qualities.—*Pomptre*. Mixed wine—Strong wine, but made so by the admixture of foreign substances; whereas the Greeks and Latins by mixed wine always understood wine diluted and lowered with water; the Hebrews, on the contrary, generally meant by it wine made stronger and more inebriating by the addition of higher and more powerful ingredients, such as honey, spices, defrutum, (or wine inspissated by boiling it down to two thirds or one half of the quantity.)—*Louth*.

The chemical analysis of the liquors used by the people in this country shows that they drink alcohol, arsenic, alum, aloes, bitter almonds, blood, chalk, cherry-laurel water, cocculus indicus, coppers, gypsum, henbane, isinglass, lime, lead, logwood, nux vomica, opium, oil of vitriol, oil of juniper, oil of turpentine, tobacco, sugar of lead, resin, etc.—*S. S. Journal*.

31. Look not thou—The safeguard is that we look not upon the wine, namely, in total abstinence from all that can intoxicate. (1) It is certain that they who let intoxicating drinks entirely alone will never become drunkards; it is uncertain about all who do not. (2) In moderate or occasional drinking there is never safety. The appetite is quickly acquired, and the habit is often formed before one is aware of it. When the appetite is inherited, a single glass may



in the cup, when it moveth itself aright:

32 At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder.

33 Thine eyes shall behold strange

a Or, a cockatrice. b In the heart of

so rouse and inflame it as to render recovery almost impossible. (3) There is no safety in the use of pure liquors instead of the impure. Doubtless they are less deadly than the drugged and poisonous mixtures which are manufactured and sold for wine, brandy, whisky, etc., but woe, sorrow, poison, and death are in them all. (4) Safety is not in light wines, ale, and cider; that is, in fermented liquors instead of spirituous. Drunkenness abounds in all wine-growing districts; it did in Palestine, as the lesson shows.—*D. A. Whedon*. **When it is red**—The wine of Lebanon is said to be of a rich golden color, like Malaga, or the darker sherris. Sometimes the color is heightened by saffron. **When it giveth its color**—Literally, "its eye," the clear *brightness*, or the beaded bubbles on which the wine-drinker looks with complacency.—*Plumptre*. **In the cup**—Sparkles or bubbles when poured out or shaken; "carries a head," which is regarded to be an indication of the strength and quality of the liquor. Some wines are celebrated for their brilliant appearance—as those of Lebanon, which were said to be of a rich golden color. Red wines are most esteemed in the East.—*W. Hunter*. **When it moveth itself aright**—The English suggests the thought of a sparkling wine, but the Hebrew word, here and in Song of Solomon 7. 9, where it is rendered "goeth down sweetly," describes rather the pellucid stream flowing pleasantly from the wine-skin or jug into the goblet, or the throat.—*Plumptre*.

32. **Biteth like a serpent**—Pleasant as the cup is at the moment, afterward it brings the sharp sting of remorse, of misery, of conscious degradation and shame, and the terror of wrath to come. No drunkard is a happy man. **Adder**—The cockatrice, as in the margin. It was a very venomous serpent. So drink poisons the body, pollutes the soul, destroys the health, enfeebles the mind, and damns both soul and body in hell.—*D. A. Whedon*. Worst of all, at last, when the cup of drunkenness shall be turned into a cup of trembling, the cup of the Lord's wrath, the dregs of which he must be forever drinking, and shall not have a drop of water to cool his inflamed tongue.—*Henry*.

women, and thine heart shall utter perverse things:

34 Yea, thou shalt be as he that lieth down <sup>b</sup> in the midst of the sea, or as he that lieth upon the top of a mast.

35 They <sup>a</sup> have stricken me, shall

the sea. c Chap. 27. 17; Jer. 5. 4.

33. **Thine eyes shall behold strange women**—Licentiousness is almost always connected with drunkenness. Drink inflames the lustful passions, dethrones reason, and destroys self-control. How many fall from virtue into ruin by a single glass!—*D. A. Whedon*. **Strange women** There is another interpretation to this expression. Thine eye shall see strange things; not strange women, but strange things, the objects of a drunken man's vision, as the doubling of certain objects, their inversion, their tremulous or swaying motion.—*Zockler*. Is there here a reference to the *delirium tremens*, which Miller calls "the nightmare of the vice?"—the horrible imagery and spectral terrors conjured up under the influence of *mania a potu*.—*W. Hunter*. **Utter perverse things**—The tongue also grows unruly, and talks extravagantly; by it the heart utters perverse things, things contrary to reason, religion, and common civility, which they would be ashamed to speak if they were sober.—*Henry*.

34. **As he that lieth down in the midst of the sea**—Their heads are giddy, and, when they lie down to sleep, they are as if they were tossed by the rolling waves of the sea, or upon the top of a mast; hence they complain that their heads swim; their sleeps are commonly unquiet and not refreshing, and their dreams tumultuous.—*Henry*. **Lieth upon the top of a mast**—He is utterly regardless of life; which is expressed very forcibly by one in a state of intoxication ascending the shrouds, clasping the mast-head, and there falling asleep; whence, in a few moments, he must either fall down upon the deck and be dashed to pieces, or fall into the sea and be drowned.—*Clarke*. They are in imminent danger of death, of damnation, lie as much exposed as if they slept upon the top of a mast, and yet are secure, and sleep on.—*Henry*.

35. **They have stricken me**—The drunkard, in his sottish stupidity, soliloquizes, apparently unconscious of any evil effects from his indulgence, and is urged by the strength of his appetite and habits to pursue his old vice.—*W. Hunter*. **I felt it not**—The drunkard does not feel the rebuke that he receives, his apprehension

*thou say, and I was not sick; they have beaten me, and I felt it not:*

c I knew it not. Eph. 4. 19.

being dulled into stupidity. **I will seek it yet again**—Even in his consciousness of misery there is a knowledge that there is around him a chain which will again drag him down to drink. Among the certain facts the following may be affirmed: (1) That the Bible nowhere condemns abstinence from strong drinks. (2) That the Bible nowhere associates God's blessing with the use of strong drinks. (3) That the Bible, in various ways, commends abstinence from strong drinks. (4) That the Bible, in various and emphatic methods, exhibits the manifold evils of strong drinks. (5) That the Bible is the first book that proclaimed abstinence to be the cure for drunkenness. (6) That the great principle of the Bible—philanthropy—enforces the practice of abstinence.—*Lees*.

1. The drunkard forfeits *man*; and doth divest

All worldly right, save what he has by *beast*.

—*Geo. Herbert*.

2. Sin makes a man *contemptible* in life, *mis-er-able* in death, and *wretched* to all eternity. Is it not strange, then, that men should love it?—

*A. Clarke*.

3. When the Duke of Wellington, in one of his campaigns, heard that a large supply of wine lay in his march, he at once sent out a body of troops to knock every wine-barrel on the head.

4. I never suffer ardent spirits in my house, thinking them evil spirits; and if the poor could witness the white livers, the dropsies, the shattered nervous systems, which I have seen as the consequences of drinking, they would be aware that spirits and poisons are synonymous terms.—*Sir Astley Cooper*.

5. When the most famous of modern pugilists was asked if he did not use plenty of ale and porter while in training for his brutal prize-fights, he replied, "When I have business on hand there is nothing like cold water and the dumb-bells."—*Cujler*.

6. Weston, the pedestrian, once said that to use wine or whisky, even moderately, when undertaking one of his great feats, would insure its failure.

7. "What is whisky bringing?" inquired a dealer. "Bringing women and children to want," was the appropriate answer.—*Bungay*.

8. Annual cost of the liquor traffic in the United States, \$1,650,000,000. The meat bill of New York, for the year, is \$30,000,000, and the liquor bill \$68,000,000.

9. In England, where moderate drinking is allowed in many of the Churches, 30,000 *professing* Christians are annually the victims of the cup.

when <sup>3</sup> shall I awake? I will seek it yet again.

<sup>3</sup> Deut. 29. 19; Isa. 56. 12; 2 Peter 2. 22.

10. It is estimated that, in the United States and Territories, 130,000 places are licensed to sell spirituous liquors, and 390,000 persons are employed in these grog-shops. If we add to these the number employed in distilleries and wholesale liquor-shops we shall have about 570,000, while there are but 150,000 ministers and school teachers. While one class is laboring to advance the country in moral and spiritual life, the other plies the work of death. The clergymen cost the United States \$12,000,000 annually; the criminals, \$40,000,000; the lawyers, \$80,000,000; intoxicating drinks, to satisfy and increase depraved appetites, \$700,000,000. The liquor traffic annually sends 100,000 to prison, reduces 200,000 children to a state worse than orphanage, sends 60,000 to a drunkard's grave, makes 600,000 drunkards, and brings woe, disease, misery, crime, and premature death all over the land.—*National Temperance Almanac*.

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#### Practical Thoughts.

[THE WARNING AGAINST WINE.]

1. Our lesson warns against the woe and wickedness which strong drink brings. Ver. 29.

2. It warns against strong drink as the cause of quarrel and strife among men. Ver. 29.

3. It warns against strong drink as causing bloodshed and injury. Ver. 29.

4. It warns against strong drink as bringing weakness and disease to the physical system. Ver. 29.

5. It warns against strong drink as a tempter which seduces men to destruction. Ver. 31, 32.

6. It warns against strong drink as exciting lustful passions. Ver. 33.

7. It warns against strong drink as fastening the chain of habit, from which escape is well-nigh impossible. Ver. 35.

B. C. 980.]

## LESSON XI.

[Dec. 14,

## VANITY OF WORLDLY PLEASURES.—Eccles. 2. 1-13.

**GOLDEN TEXT.**—Wisdom excelleth folly, as far as light excelleth darkness.—ECCLES. 2. 13.

TIME.—B. C. 980.

**INTRODUCTION.**—Ecclesiastes is the long-received Greek term for the Heb. *Kohleth*, or *Cohleth*. This is a feminine participle of the verb which means *to collect*, applied to collections of people, and usually for religious purposes. The fitness of this term as applied to Solomon is conceded by all, however much critics may differ upon the question of its actual authorship. In 1 Kings 8 he is described as gathering the people of Israel in a grand, solemn assembly to worship Jehovah in the place which he had now built—"a settled place." Here he taught them to have communion with the Most High, and to come there with joy and gladness to keep their holy days. He is the one of all the rulers and inspired men of Israel to whom this title eminently belongs. As title of this book, *Kohleth* is singularly beautiful and appropriate. The work of the book is to gather the people from difficulties and perplexities and vanities and errors, which led them astray from God, back to his truth, his law, and himself. This is done with the sympathy, patience, and gentleness of a shepherd, yet with the dignity of a teacher and the authority of a king.—*Dr. Hyde*. **Authorship of Ecclesiastes.**—This question of authorship must not be made too important. There are other accepted books of Scripture whose authors have not been identified as the glowing, earnest book of Malachi. By whatever hand God was pleased to give "Kohleth" to the world—whether we discern the body of the writer, or lose it behind an impenetrable screen—we may rest confidently upon the book itself. Its broad sympathies, its profound and practical experience in so various affairs, its calm, wise, and gentle guidance, by meandering paths, from darkness to consoling light—these were given to us by the inspiration of God, and are profitable for doctrine, for reproof, and for instruction in righteousness.—*Dr. Hyde*. On the whole, it seems the most reasonable course to accept as a simple statement of fact the words with which Ecclesiastes begins; and, in accordance with the voice of the Church from the beginning, to regard Solomon as the author of this book. We are not indeed bound to assert this fact in such way as if the authorship of a book of Scripture were of the same importance to readers of Scripture as the spiritual facts revealed and the practical rules inculcated therein.—*Bullock*. **Inspiration of Ecclesiastes.**—By "inspired" I do not mean that all the feelings to which that book gives utterance are right or holy feelings. John could not have written that book. John, who had lived in the atmosphere of love, looking on this world as God looks on it—calmly, with the deep peace of heaven in his soul, at peace with himself and at peace with man—John could never have penned the book of Ecclesiastes. To have written the book of Ecclesiastes a man must have been qualified in a peculiar way. He must have been a man of intense feeling; large in heart, as the Bible calls it. He must have been a man who had drunk deep of unlawful pleasure. He must have been a man in the upper ranks of society, with plenty of leisure and plenty of time to brood on self. Therefore, in saying it is an inspired book, I mean the inspired account of the workings of a guilty, erring, and yet, at last, conquering, spirit. It is not written as a wise and calm Christian would write, but as a heart would write which was fevered with disappointment, jaded with passionate attempts in the pursuit of blessedness, and forced to God as the last resource.—*F. W. Robertson*.

1 I said 'in mine heart, Go to now, I will prove thee with mirth; therefore

enjoy pleasure: and, behold, <sup>2</sup> this also is vanity.

[Luke 12, 19.

21-a, 50, 11.

1. **I said**—Having stated his experience of the vanity of wisdom, Solomon now relates how he pursued his investigation with his second gift, namely, riches, and the enjoyments which riches supply; and how this brought him to the same result. The course of action pursued by him in this chapter has been compared with that of the rich man in our Lord's parable. (Luke 12, 16-21.) But it must be remembered that Solomon's object was the acquisition of wisdom, not self-indulgence, and that he did not fail to look forward to the certainty of death overtaking him.—*Bul-*

*lock*. **In mine heart**—Better, *To my heart*. **Go to**—Rather, *Come now*.—*Dr. Hyde*. **Prove thee with mirth**—By allowing to myself the free enjoyment of the present and sensible delights of human life.—*Ibid*. **Enjoy pleasure**—"See pleasure." In ancient language "to see" is used in a wider range of meanings, as that of "to experience."—*Dr. Hyde*. **Vanity**—It is most important to understand this word, (*hebel*, or, as it is spelt, when used as a proper name, in Gen. 4. 2, *abel*), which occurs no less than thirty-seven times in Ecclesiastes, and **has**

2 I said <sup>3</sup> of laughter, *It is mad*; and of mirth what doeth it?

3 I <sup>4</sup> sought in mine heart <sup>a</sup> to give myself unto wine, yet acquainted mine heart with wisdom, and to lay hold on folly, till I might see what *was* that good

<sup>3</sup> Prov. 14. 13; Chap. 7. 6.—<sup>4</sup> Chap. 1. 17.—<sup>a</sup> To draw my

been called the key of the book. Primarily it means "breath," "light wind," as it should be translated in Isa. 57. 13, etc. It denotes that which (1) passes away more or less quickly and completely, (2) leaves either no result or no adequate result behind, and therefore (3) fails to satisfy the mind of man, which naturally craves for something permanent and progressive; it is also applied to (4) idols, as contrasted with the living, eternal, and almighty God, and thus in the Hebrew mind it is connected with sin. In this book it is applied to all works on earth, to pleasure, grandeur, wisdom, the life of man, childhood, youth, and length of days, the oblivion of the grave, wandering and unsatisfied desires, unenjoyed possessions, and anomalies in the moral government of the world.—*Bullock*.

Solomon here, in pursuit of the *summum bonum*—the felicity of man, adjourns out of his study, his library, his elaboratory, his council-chamber, where he had in vain sought for it, into the park and the play-house, his garden and his summer-house; exchanges the company of the philosophers and grave senators for that of the wits and gallants and the *beaver-esprits* of his court, to try if he could find true satisfaction and happiness among them. Here he takes a great step downward, from the noble pleasures of the intellect to the brutal ones of sense; yet, if he resolve to make a thorough trial, he must knock at this door, because here a great part of mankind imagine they have found that which he was in quest of.—*Henry*.

2. I said of laughter . . . of mirth—Rath-er, I said to laughter, Mad [art thou]; and to mirth, What [art thou] doing? that is, what good canst thou effect? What are thy fruits? Mere bitterness and disappointment.—*Wordsworth*. Innocent mirth, soberly, seasonably, and moderately used, is a good thing, fits for business, and helps to soften the toils and chagrins of human life; but, when it is excessive and immoderate, it is foolish and fruitless.—*Henry*.

3. To give myself unto wine—Jerome explains it, "to draw on life with delights, and to cast asleep with pleasure as with wine my flesh free from all cares." Yet acquainting mine heart with wisdom—Many give themselves to these without consulting their hearts at all, not

for the sons of men which they should do under the heaven <sup>b</sup> all the days of their life.

4 I made me great works; I builded me houses; I planted me vineyards;

5 I made me gardens and orchards,

flesh with wine.—<sup>b</sup> The number of the days of their life.

looking any further than merely the gratification of the sensual appetites; but Solomon applied himself to it rationally, and as a man; critically, and only to make an experiment.—*Henry*. To lay hold on folly—He sought to lay hold on folly, to see the utmost that folly would do toward making men happy; but he had like to have carried the jest (as we say) too far. He resolved that the folly should not take hold on him, not get the mastery of him, but he would lay hold on it, and keep it at a distance; yet he found it too hard for him.—*Henry*. Till I might see what was good—The philosopher found by bitter experience that it was unsafe to tamper with carnal enjoyments; he became a victim of his own experiments—like a chemist scorching or poisoning his hands in his own laboratory. He lost his spiritual purity, liberty, and vigor, and lapsed into sensualism and idolatry.—*Wordsworth*.

4. I made me—There is in these words not only a specific record of personal experience, but a sorrowful confession of all-absorbing selfishness. I, the son of David, and king of Israel in Jerusalem; I, the Jeddiah, *beloved of the Lord*, confess, with penitential sorrow and shame, that I labored for myself; not for God's glory, but for my own pleasure and aggrandizement. The moral of all this is, that self-love ends in self-loathing.—*Wordsworth*. Great works—Solomon used the resources of the kingdom in magnificent enterprises. His own palace stood on a neighboring hill-top to the temple. He built, also, for his Egyptian wife, a palace, called, 1 Kings 7. 2, "The house of the forest of Lebanon." His vineyard at Baalhamon is mentioned in Song of Solomon 8. 11. He probably had others also, as, for instance, at Engedi. Sol. Song 1. 14.—*Dr. Hyde*.

5. I made me gardens—The mind that dotes on earthly things plants to itself vineyards, gardens, and orchards on earth, (like the beautiful scenery of Sodom, and, may we not add, in modern days, like the fair gardens and orchards of the region around the Salt Lake?) but the devout soul seeks for those vineyards, orchards, and gardens in which is "the Tree of Life, whose leaves are for the healing of the

and I planted trees in them of all *kind* of fruits;

6 I made me pools of water, to water therewith the wood that bringeth forth trees;

7 I got me servants and maidens, and

*Sons of my house,*

nations," and fongs for the refreshing pools of clear, living water, which flows in the paradise of God.—*Wordsworth*. Orchards—The word is "paradises," that is, parks or pleasure-grounds. It occurs in Song of Solomon 4. 13, and Neh. 2. 8. Indications of at least three of these are pointed out by Dean Stanley, ("Jewish Church," ii, 26.) One at Jerusalem, near the pool of Siloam, called "the king's garden," (Neh. 3. 15; Jer. 52. 7;) a second near Bethlehem, to which the next verse seems to refer particularly; and a third in the remote north, on the heights of Hermon. Song of Solomon 4. 9; 8. 11.—*Bullock*.

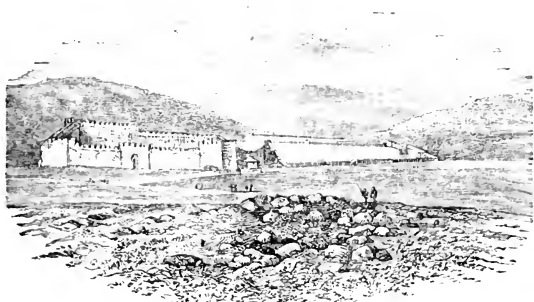
6. Pools of water—The making of cisterns and fixtures for watering gardens is, in the dry

had servants born in my house; also I had great possessions of great and small cattle above all that were in Je-ru'sa-lem before me;

8 I gathered me also silver and gold, and the peculiar treasure of kings and

*1 King 9, 28, 10, 10, 11, 21*

those who were born in the house, and are mentioned afterward.—*Bullock*. Servants—"Slaves." He who studies the laws of Moses will see that such provision was made for servants that their condition was not one of slavery in its more objectionable sense. In fact, there is no Hebrew word for slave. The Hebrew bondman lost no right but that of the recompense of his own labor. If he was maimed by his master he became free. If he was killed by him, his master was slain by the sword. Greek, Roman, and American slavery was very different from this. The slave was also taught in the law; could not be delivered up if he ran away; could marry a daughter of his master; and a maid-servant could be the lawful wife of her



Solomon's Pools.

East, indispensable. For such purposes, in part, the now famous pools of Solomon, south of Bethlehem, may have been constructed. The same occurs in our Colorado. A well-watered Eastern garden, enlivened by playing fountains and birds "that sing among the branches," is a most charming object.—*Dr. Hyde*. A short distance south of Bethlehem, in a valley in the green, winding defile of Urtas, three "Pools of Solomon" are still shown, and an adjoining hill still bears the name of the "Little Paradise."—*Bullock*.

7. I got—Rather, *I bought*, in distinction to

master or her master's son. Servants, then, either purchased or born on the place, were not what we call slaves.—*Dr. Hyde*. Great and small cattle—Hebrew, *oxen and sheep*. See the sacrifices at the dedication of the temple. 1 Kings 8. 63.—*Dr. Hyde*. All . . . before me—King David's herds and flocks are mentioned in 1 Chron. 27. 29, 31, but we have no specific account of the wealth of other Canaanitish or Hebrew inhabitants of Jerusalem before Solomon.—*Bullock*.

8. I gathered me silver and gold—Solomon's income, in gold, from trade, was over

of the provinces; I gat me men singers and women singers, and the delights of the sons of men, as "musical instruments, and that of all sorts.

9 So <sup>6</sup>I was great, and increased more than all that were before me in Je-ru'sa-

*d* Musical instrument and instruments.

£3,300,000, besides all other revenue. He made silver like stones for abundance in Jerusalem. 1 Kings 10. 27, and elsewhere.—*Dr. Hyde*. Peculiar treasure of kings—Gold and silver are the peculiar treasure which kings derive from provinces, as distinct from land, cattle, etc., the usual wealth of subjects.—*Dr. Hyde*. Men singers and women singers—He had every thing that was charming and diverting; all sorts of melody and music, vocal and instrumental, *men singers and women singers*, the best voices he could pick up, and all the wind and hand instruments that were then in use. His father had a genius for music, but it should seem he employed it more to serve his devotion than the son, who made it more his diversion.—*Henry*. The delights of the sons of men—A paraphrase of those sensual gratifications which are described more clearly by the sacred historian. 1 Kings 11. 3.—*Wordsworth*. As musical instruments—It seems to mean a wife and wives, that is, a queen and concubines, (see *Gesenius*, 906; *Fuerst*, 1346; *Hitzig*, 138; and so *Van Ess* and *De Wette* and *Field*;) and it may best be illustrated by the sacred narrative in 1 Kings 11. 1: "King Solomon loved many strange women, together with (or besides) the daughter of Pharaoh;" and 1 Kings 3. 1. and 7. 8: "Solomon made also an house for Pharaoh's daughter, whom he had taken to wife."—*Wordsworth*. Other commentators object to this translation, and prefer that of the Authorized Version, including with the "musical instruments" the revelries associated with feasts.

9. So I was great—The result of all these efforts, his wisdom standing by to guide him, was the unrivaled greatness of the "Grand Monarch." He developed every resource of his kingdom, and, by alliances and commerce, enhanced his wealth.—*Dr. Hyde*. My wisdom remained with me—Observe, he calls it "*his* wisdom," and says that it continued *with him*. It is evident, therefore, that he is speaking of that lower wisdom of the human intellect which too often labors for its own glorification, and displays itself in secular and earthly operations which are only material and perishable; and not

lem: also my wisdom remained with me.

10 And whatsoever mine eyes desired I kept not from them, I withheld not my heart from any joy; for my heart rejoiced in all my labour: and <sup>7</sup>this was my portion of all my labour.

<sup>6</sup> Chap. 1. 16.—<sup>7</sup> Chap. 3. 22; 5. 18; 9. 9.

of that higher and divine wisdom which is God's wisdom, and cometh from above, (see James 1. 17, and 3. 17, "The wisdom that is from above is pure, full of good fruits,") and is conversant with what is heavenly and eternal, and aims at the glory of God. The former kind of wisdom may co-exist with such animal indulgences of sensual appetites as he is here describing, but the latter wisdom is "first pure, then peaceable," and dwells only with the pure in heart.—*Wordsworth*.

But let none be emboldened hereby to lay the reins on the neck of their appetites, presuming that they may do that and yet retain their wisdom, for they have not such a strength of wisdom as Solomon had, nay, and Solomon was deceived; for how did *his wisdom remain with him* when he lost his religion so far as to build altars to strange gods for the humoring of his strange wives? But thus far *his wisdom remained with him*, that he was master of his pleasures, and not a slave to them, and kept himself capable of making a judgment of them. He went over into the enemy's country, not as a deserter, but as a spy, to discover the nakedness of their land.—*Henry*.

10. Whatsoever mine eyes desired—Whatsoever was grateful to my senses, or my heart desired. He ascribes desire to the eyes, because the sight of the eyes is the usual and powerful incentive of desires, of which see Josh. 7. 21; Job 31. 1; Matt. 5. 28.—*Pool*. I kept not from them—This experiment, so broad and full, was not the reckless conduct of a debauchee, but there was method and discretion in it. My heart rejoiced in all my labor—I had the comfort of all my labors, and was not hindered from the free and full enjoyment of them by sickness or war, or any other calamities occurrent.—*Pool*. This was my portion of all my labor—This present and temporary enjoyment of them was all the benefit which I could expect or receive from all my labors, so that I made the best of them. I had a heart to use them, which many men through covetousness have not; and I tasted the sweetness of them, which many others cannot do; and, therefore, if any man could arrive at happiness by this means, I had done it.—*Pool*.

11 Then I looked on all the works that my hands had wrought, and on the labour that I had laboured to do; and, behold, all *was* vanity and vexation of spirit, and *there was* no profit under the sun.

12 And I turned myself to behold

\* Chap. 1, 17; 7, 25.—*Or*, in those things which have been

11. Then I looked—Hebrew, *Then I turned*. The result is, that not one or all these gathered delights quieted the craving mind or gave lasting happiness. *All was vanity and a grasping at wind*, and there was no gain from them at all.—*Dr. Hyde*. All was vanity—I gave myself to the search of glory and pleasure, and thought that the fruit of my labor would be gathered, in indulgence of self; but at length I returned to my senses, and looked at the work of my hands and perceived them to be full of vanity, of error, and corruption.—*Jerome*. There was no profit—The pleasure was past and gone, and I was never the better for it, but as empty as before, and had nothing left but sorrowful reflections upon it.—*Boyl*.

12. I turned myself to behold—To compare wisdom, and the mad pursuit of pleasure, which is folly. What can the man do—Who is a mere subject, and not possessed of royal advantages. All the resources of the realm were at Solomon's command, and he used them in the acquirement of wisdom.—*Dr. Hyde*. Even that which hath been—What is any man that in this study of wisdom and folly shall come after me, who, from my position, have had such peculiar advantages for carrying it on? That which man did of old he can do again; he is not likely to add to the result of my researches, nor even to equal them.—*Boyl*.

13. Then I saw that wisdom excelleth folly—The verdict follows the comparison. While culture and study cannot bring abiding good, or freedom from sorrow, yet they yield a noble and delightful joy as compared with the indulgences of passions which we share with the brutes.—*Dr. Hyde*. As far as light excelleth—*Wisdom* is here compared to the genial light of the morning, and *folly* to the heavy night that hangs dark and blinding upon one's way and upon one's eyes. Of course, the "light excelleth."—*Dr. Hyde*.

#### Authorities to be Consulted.

Dean Stanley's Jewish Church, lecture 28. Sunday Magazine, (Edinburg,) vol. ii, p. 164. Article by Dr. Plumtree, The Confessions of

wisdom, "and madness, and folly; for what *can* the man *do* that cometh after the King? *even* that which hath been already done.

13 Then I saw<sup>f</sup> that wisdom excelleth folly, as far as light excelleth darkness.

already done.—<sup>f</sup>That there is an excellency to wisdom more than

King Solomon." F. W. Robertson's Sermons. Kito's Daily Bible Illustrations, 11th, 12th weeks. See the valuable Introduction to Ecclesiastes in the Bible (Speaker's) Commentary, also in Bishop Wordsworth's Exposition. Foster's Cyclopædia of Illustrations, [numbers marked with a star refer to poetical quotations,] ver. 1: \*1096, 4464, 12143; 2: 2429, 5907, 10570; 3: 4157, 8526; 4-9: 11766; 8: 4065, 10668; 9-11: 2721; 11: 5518, 11591; 13: 6046, 11015, 12237.

#### Practical Thoughts.

##### [WORLDLY PLEASURE.]

1. There is a fascination in worldly pleasure, which allures even the wisest of men. Ver. 1.
2. Some seek pleasure in strong drink, as if hoping to find joy in wine. Ver. 3.
3. Some seek pleasure in splendor, state, and magnificence, as if to feed the soul with the things of earth. Vers. 4-6.
4. Some seek pleasure in accumulating riches, trying to satisfy the heart with worldly treasure. Vers. 7, 8.
5. Some seek pleasure in sensual gratification, yielding to the lower appetites and passions. Ver. 8.
6. Those who have tried the pleasure to the utmost testify that it is a vain attempt to find satisfaction in it. Ver. 11.

#### Sermon Outline.

BY REV. W. F. MALLABEU, D.D.

All admire wisdom, however few possess it. There are but few who do not think themselves wiser than they are esteemed to be by their neighbors.

The young are especially liable to overestimate their own wisdom. Wisdom implies the idea of a just comprehension of the true ends of life, namely, (a) The glory of God in all we possess and in all we can do. (b) The doing of all possible good, both to the souls and bodies of our fellow-men. (c) The attainment for ourselves of all possible excellency and personal development.

Wisdom implies the idea of right thoughts and right action in regard to our entire nature.

The fact is recognized that man is a complex being, that he possesses body, intellect, soul; that

proper care for each these of these is essential to our highest well being.

Wisdom recognizes the fact that body, mind, and soul exist within the realm of unchangeable law; that the law is sustained by irrevocable penalties; that obedience to law insures prosperity and brings reward; that disobedience entails disaster and punishment.

Wisdom implies—

(a) Self-denial: the body is kept under subjection, the passions are mastered and held in control; the mind is restrained, and the lawless thought is prohibited; the spiritual nature, the affections of the soul, are not permitted to cherish what is low, base, unworthy, and sinful.

(b) Self-sacrifice: life is not lived for selfish ends; all things are laid upon the altar of service, for the realization of the great ends of life; "it is more blessed to give than to receive," is the thought that is an ever-present inspiration.

(c) Loyalty to God; "the fear of God is the beginning of wisdom; his law is the paramount rule of action; his will is recognized as the supreme authority; and this in regard to body, mind, and soul.

Wisdom is not a natural endowment, it cannot be purchased.

It is obtained by experience. Little by little the true wisdom may be increased and improved, however meager it may be at the start. It is obtained by observation. It is possible to gain wisdom from the experience of others, and from careful attention to the facts of history and the principles and laws of nature. Above all, it is gained from the reverent study of the word of God; and from the consciously receptive attitude maintained toward the Spirit of enlightenment and truth.

Folly is the opposite of wisdom.

(a) It loses sight of the true ends of life. It is careless of the glory of God, of the good of others, and of personal growth and progress.

(b) It is alike careless of right thought and action, whether such thought and action have regard to body, mind, or soul.

(c) It knows nothing of self-denial, self-sacrifice, or loyalty to God. It imperiously demands indulgence in every respect; it is selfish to the last degree, and careless, if not defiantly rebellious, in its relations to God.

(d) It is born in the human heart, and grows with its indulgence; its end is the debasement and destruction of the entire nature of man. Surely, as far as light excelleth darkness, wisdom excelleth folly.

One manifestation of folly is seen in the pursuit of worldly pleasures. These pleasures may be positively sinful and directly forbidden in the word of God, or they may be specified in part as "dancing, playing at games of chance, attending theaters, horse races, circuses, dancing parties, or patronizing dancing schools, or such other amusements as are of obviously misleading or questionable moral tendency."

Both these classes of pleasures are worldly, and those who indulge in them are guilty of folly, because—

(a) In their pursuit and enjoyment, time is squandered; resources are wasted; the powers of body, mind, and soul are weakened; morals are corrupted; the spiritual nature is debased.

(b) In their pursuit and enjoyment there can be no real satisfaction of mind or soul, for they are in direct opposition to the law of God in the soul, they being of the earth earthy cannot possibly satisfy the longings and inspirations of the nature that was created in the image and likeness of God.

(c) Though these pleasures may be indulged in, it is only for a short time; death ends all this; they do not reach into eternity except to blast and curse forever. The power to enjoy the pleasures of sin weakens with every indulgence; in the world to come there is no brimming cup of pleasure; only the gall and dregs of bitterness remain.

Since these things are so, and experience, observation, and revelation assure us of their reality, how true must be the text that "Wisdom excelleth folly, as far as light excelleth darkness."

INTRODUCTION.—The wise and penitent preacher is here closing his sermon; and he closes it, not only like a good orator, but like a good preacher, with that which was likely to make the best impressions, and which he wished might be powerful and lasting upon his hearers. Here is, (1) An exhortation to young people to begin betimes to be religious, and not to put it off to old age, (verse 1,) enforced with arguments taken from the calamities of old age, (verse 1-5,) and the great change that death will make upon us. Verse 6, 7. (2) A repetition of the great truth he had undertaken to prove in this discourse, the vanity of the world. Verse 8. (3) A confirmation and recommendation of what he had written in this and his other books, as worthy to be duly weighed and considered. Verse 9-12. (4) The whole matter



summed up and concluded with a charge to all to be truly religious. In consideration of the judgment to come. Verse 13, 14.—*Henry*. The two sentences at the end of Ecclesiastes afford the best guidance for its right interpretation. They are like the rudder by which the whole book is steered. Sometimes the sacred vessel of this marvelous composition may seem to the eye of a cursory reader to be tossed about by the winds of doubt; sometimes to be even plunging and foundering in the depths of despondency and despair; but this is an optical illusion. The ship is riding safely on the billows, and it goes down into the bosom of the abyss in order to rise more gloriously to the crest of the wave, and to ride buoyantly and joyfully like a bright and divine thing in the midst of the storm; for the eye of the pilot is fixed on the stars above, and his hand is firmly grasping the helm; and on his heart are inscribed the words, "Fear God, and keep his commandments, for this is the whole man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, whether it be good, or whether it be evil."—*Wordsworth*.

1 Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them;

2 While the sun, or the light, or the moon, or the stars, be not dark-

12 Cor. 5. 1.—a Or, the grinders fall

1. **Remember now**—Rather, *and remember*. The connection between this verse and the preceding one is unfortunately interrupted by our division of chapters. "Now" is simply a copulative, not an adverb of time.—*Bullock*. **Thy creator**—Gratitude to God, as Creator, (comp. 11. 5,) is here inculcated, as was previously (11. 9) fear of God as Judge. In one word, godliness, acquired as a habit in youth, is recommended as the proper compensation for that natural cessation of youthful happiness which makes the *days* of old age more or less *evil*; more evil in proportion as there is less of godliness in the heart, and less evil where there is more godliness.—*Bullock*. **In the days of thy youth**—In the freshness of thy youth remember God, who made thee. Do not give to him from whom thou hast received all, for he is thy Creator, the mere refuse of thy life; but offer to him the brightest flowers and first and richest fruits of thy years.—*Wordsworth*. **While the evil days**—Far more grievous and terrible when it is loaded with the sad remembrance of a man's youthful follies and lusts, and with the dreadful prospect of approaching death and judgment, which makes him see that he cannot live, and yet dare not die, and with the consideration an experience of the hardness of his heart which, in that age, is rarely brought to true repentance, and so generally expires either in vain presumption or in hellish desperation.—*Pool*. **No pleasure**—The freshness of life is gone; the world is dark and drear; and the soured spirit has no heart for devotion.—*Dr. Hyde*.

2. **While the sun**—This representation of

ened, nor the clouds return after the rain:

3 In the day when the keepers of the house shall tremble, and the strong men shall bow themselves, and the grinders cease, because they are few, and those that look out of the windows be darkened,

because they grind little. 2 Gen. 27. 1.

old age is addressed to a youth who requires warning. It should be contrasted with the encouraging description, in 2 Sam. 23. 4, 5, of the life-time of a godly and just man, under the corresponding figures of a dawn without clouds and sunshine after rain.—*Bullock*. **Darkened**—The darkening of the lights of heaven denotes a time of affliction and sadness. Comp. Ezek. 32. 7, 8; Job 3. 9; Isa. 5. 30; etc. **Clouds return**—As, when the weather is disposed to wet, no sooner is one cloud blown over than another succeeds it, so it is with old people: when they are got free from one pain or ailment, they are seized with another, so that their distempers are *like a continual dropping in a very rainy day*.—*Henry*.

3. **In the day**—This verse is best understood as referring to the change which old age brings to four parts of the body, the arms, the legs, the teeth, and the eyes.—*Bullock*. **The keepers of the house**—The aged body is compared to a "house," or rather to a *mill structure*, in which the vital functions and operations are a *grinding*, and which is defended by *keepers*, and upheld by *strong men*, with *windows* through which the inmates *look out* upon the world. These "keepers," that defend, are the arms; these supporters are the legs; and the "windows" are the eyes.—*Dr. Hyde*. **Strong men**—The legs and thighs, which used to support the body and bear its weight, bend, and cannot serve for labor, as they have done, but are soon tired.—*Henry*. **Grinders**—The teeth. **Those that look out of the windows be darkened**—The eyes wax dim, as Isaac's (Gen. 27. 1) and Ahijah's. 1 Kings 14. 4. Moses was a rare instance of one who, when 120 years old, had

4 And the <sup>3</sup>doors shall be shut in the streets, when the sound of the grinding is low, and he shall rise up at the voice of the bird, and all <sup>4</sup>the daughters of music shall be brought low;

5 Also *when* they shall be afraid of *that which is high*, and fears shall be in the way, and the <sup>6</sup>almond tree shall flourish, and the grasshopper shall be a

<sup>3</sup> Micah. 1. 1.—<sup>4</sup> 2 Sam. 19. 35.—<sup>6</sup> Lev. 19. 23.

good eye-sight; but ordinarily the sight decays in old people as soon as any thing, and it is a mercy to them that art helps nature with spectacles.—*Henry*.

4. **And the doors**—Here the house is viewed from without. The way of entry and exit is stopped; little or no sound issues forth to tell of life stirring within. The old man, as he grows older, has less in common with the rising generation; mutual interest and intercourse decline.—*Bullock*. **Shut**—By loss of teeth. No dental art was known to Kokeleth.—*Dr. Hyde*. **Sound of the grinding is low**—Not merely the mastication, but the whole digestive and vital processes are feeble and slow, so that the man's whole bodily system is like an almost silent mill. **Rise up at the voice of the bird**—Referring to an old man, possibly the master of the house, rising out of sleep, (comp. Prov. 6. 9,) at the first sound in the morning.—*Bullock*. Better rendered by critics, *it*, (not *he*,) referring to "sound," amounts to the voice of a sparrow. That is, the vital processes of this human mill are so feeble that its grinding "sound" is not louder than a sparrow's *cheep*. This grinding "sound" is heard in the "low" and cracked voice of the old man.—*Dr. Hyde*. **Daughters of music**—Of man's divine endowment of "music," the notes and strains of the musician are the offspring or "daughters." These are *brought low*, so that no true "music" can be poured forth.—*Dr. Hyde*.

5. **Afraid of that which is high**—In youth the man could look down from the high tower and not be dizzy; he could mount the cliff and not be exhausted. His brain and legs are now too weak, and he dreads all heights.—*Dr. Hyde*. **The grasshopper**—Or locust, the lightest insect. Little vexations are compared to flies flitting about; even they become burdensome.—*Wordsworth*. **The almond tree shall flourish**—*Dr. Thomson* ("The Land and the Book") says of the almond tree: "It is the type of old age whose hair is white . . . the

burden, and desire shall fail; because man goeth to his long home; and the mourners go about the streets:

6 Or ever the silver cord be loosed, or the golden bowl be broken, or the pitcher be broken at the fountain, or the wheel broken at the cistern:

7 Then <sup>6</sup>shall the dust return to the earth as it was; <sup>7</sup>and the spirit shall return unto God <sup>8</sup>who gave it.

<sup>6</sup> Gen. 3. 19.—<sup>7</sup> Chap. 3. 21.—<sup>8</sup> Num. 27. 16; Zech. 12. 1.

white blossoms completely cover the whole tree; the green leaves do not appear till some time after." **Desire**—Literally, the *caper-berry*. This berry, which was eaten before meals as a provocative to appetite, shall fail to take effect on a man whose powers are exhausted.—*Bullock*. **Man goeth to his long home**—Man's "eternal house" is his place in the next world. To interpret it simply of the grave would be inconsistent with the statement in verse 7 of the return of the spirit to God.—*Bullock*.

6. **The silver cord**—Do not delay thy repentance until the hour of sickness and death, when the silver cord, which ties soul and body together, is about to be severed and *removed* by the hand of death.—*Wordsworth*. **Be loosed**—The termination of life is signified generally by the breaking of a lamp, a pitcher, and a wheel. It seems unnecessary to assign to those images respectively different parts or functions of the body, all which end at death. The **silver cord** by which the lamp hangs from the ceiling snaps, and the cup or reservoir of oil is dashed in pieces by the fall, and the **pitcher** long used to bring water from the spring is shattered; and the **wheel** by which a bucket is let down into the well is broken.—*Bullock*. Delitzsch ("Psychology," chap. 4, sec. 10) propounds a new interpretation of the symbolical meaning of these terms. According to him, the silver cord is the soul which holds the body in life, the bowl is the body, and the golden oil (compare Zech. 4. 12) within it is the spirit.

7. **The dust**—The bodily and mortal part of man. **Return to earth**—By burial and the decay of its particles. **The spirit shall return**—The fact here stated by the inspired writer is simply that the spirit, being separated at death from the body, returns to God. No more is said here of its future destiny. To return to God, who is the fountain (Psa. 36. 9) of life, certainly means to continue to live. The doctrine of life after death is implied here, as in Exod. 3. 6, (compare Mark 12. 27; Psa. 17. 15, and in

8 Vanity of vanities, saith the Preacher; all is vanity.

9 And<sup>b</sup> moreover, because the Preacher was wise, he still taught the people knowledge; yea, he gave good heed, and sought out, and set in order many proverbs.

10 The Preacher sought to find out acceptable words; and that which was written was upright, even words of truth.

<sup>b</sup> Or, the more wise the preacher was, etc.

many other passages of Scripture earlier than the age of Solomon. — *Bullock*. **Unto God**—It is not, in this return "unto God," resolved back into an impersonal breath, which is a pantheistic idea unknown to the Hebrew mind. It returns, as verse 14 indicates, a personal being "unto God," awaiting his judgment.—*Dr. Hyde*. The spirit of every man after death, good or bad, in some sense goes to God, either as a Father or as a Judge, to be kept somewhere under the custody of his almighty power, in order to the receiving of his final sentence at the last judgment, either of happiness or misery.—*Bishop Bull*.

Man is a strange sort of creature, a ray of heaven untied to a clot of earth; at death these are separated, and each goes to the place whence it came.—*Henry*.

9. **Vanity of vanities**—This solemn finale employs the key-note with which this inquiry began. It is as if the proposition then announced had now been demonstrated. The writer, committing it now to the judgment of reasonable men, feels sure of their concurrence forever.—*Dr. Hyde*. **Saith the preacher**—"Kohelah." See Introduction to Lesson XI. **All is vanity**—It is not Solomon, as a person, who speaks in this book; but it is Divine wisdom in Solomon as a king, the son of David, the type of Christ, who speaks; and Solomon gladly merges all his individuality in this ideal abstraction of Divine wisdom, and lends his own voice for the purpose of gathering together by wisdom those whom he had scattered by his folly.—*Wordsworth*.

9. **The preacher was wise**—Kohelah now defines himself in what may be reckoned his true character. He is a "hakam," (Arabic, *hakim*), or "physician," a professional man, a public teacher, one devoted to the solution of moral and practical problems. He also discoursed to the people on instructive subjects, and, with care and research, framed proverbs to guide the public thought. In his various functions of teacher, sage, and author he must have

11 The words of the wise are as goads, and as nails fastened by the masters of assemblies, which are given from one shepherd.

12 And further, by these, my son, be admonished: of making many books there is no end; and much study is a weariness of the flesh.

<sup>c</sup> Words of delight.—<sup>d</sup> Or, reading.

led a laborious and benevolent life. If Solomon be Kohelah, his conception of such a life is singularly truthful.—*Dr. Hyde*.

10. **Acceptable words**—Hebrew, *Words of consolation*. Feeling deeply for the sorrows of his kind, he found that the words that gave them relief were the frank utterances of sanctity and truth. Such are the words of this essay, which states with fearless accuracy, like that of Shakspeare, the aspects of life as actually seen from many and various positions.—*Dr. Hyde*.

11. **The words of the wise are as goads**—As goads, which stimulate oxen in plowing, so the words of the wise excite men to labor in what is good.—*Wordsworth*. **And as nails**—Better, *And as stakes firmly set, are those (words) of the masters of assemblies*. The stakes are those to which the tent-ropes are fastened, firmly holding the tent in its place.—*Dr. Hyde*. **One shepherd**, that is, *God*—who is the supreme Giver of wisdom, (Prov. 2. 6,) and the chief Shepherd. Jer. 23. 1-4.—*Bullock*.

12. **And further**—Hebrew, *But beyond this, my son, take warning*. All the books that can be made, and the most exhausting study, can make no one wiser. About fifteen thousand books are annually made in Christendom, and knowledge is rapidly increased, but duty is still taught only by the one Shepherd and Teacher, and true wisdom is from him alone.—*Dr. Hyde*. **Books**—Rather, "writings." The word may be used to describe any short document, as a bill of divorcement, (Deut. 24. 1,) or a letter, (2 Sam. 11. 15,) and it does not necessarily mean a volume. Probably the Preacher is still referring to the "words of wise men," that is, the proverbs current in his age, including, though not specially indicating, his own.—*Bullock*. **There is no end**—Solomon probably here refers to his own voluminous writings on physical phenomena and other secular matters, which are enumerated in 1 Kings 4. 33, and which are no longer extant; and not to those books which he wrote by the aid of the Holy Spirit, and which are read in the universal Church.—*Wordsworth*.

13 <sup>e</sup>Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man.

<sup>e</sup>Or. The end of the matter, even all that

**13. Hear the conclusion**—See Introduction. **Fear God, and keep**—To fear God and to obey him is the whole man, constitutes man's whole being; that only is conceded to man; all other things, as this book again and again teaches, are dependent on a higher incomprehensible Being.—*Herzfeld*. **The whole duty**—It is better syntax to read, *For this is [the duty] of every man*. So the Hebrew indicates. No man is exempt, for there are no mortal conditions that require disobedience to God.—*Dr. Hyde*. The words "duty of" are not in the original, and would be better omitted. The literal sense is, *this is all the man; the whole man*. Man is born for this. All the happiness of man depends upon his fear of God, and obedience to his will and word.—*Wordsworth*. It is all his business, and all his blessedness; our whole duty is summed up in this, and our whole comfort is bound up in this. It is the concern of every man, and ought to be his chief and continual care; it is the common concern of all men, of their whole time.—*Henry*.

**14. God shall bring every work**—This book began with a view of the arena on which mortal life is enacted. It ends with a conclusion in which nothing is concluded but mortal cares and vanities and opportunities. We are pointed, as by the marble finger of the ancient statue, to the tribunal hereafter. In the cool light of the world, where change and confusion never enter, there sits the most worthy Judge Eternal. Beyond that Koheleth is silent; but how full of meaning is his silence!—*Dr. Hyde*. **Every secret thing**—Note: (1) There is a judgment to come, in which every man's eternal state will be finally determined. (2) God himself will be the Judge, God-man will, not only because he has a right to judge, but because he is perfectly fit for it, infinitely wise and just. (3) *Every work* will then be brought into judgment, will be inquired into, and called over again. It will be a day to bring to remembrance every thing done in the body. (4) The great thing to be then judged of concerning every work is whether it be good or evil, conformable to the will of God, or a violation of it. (5) Even secret things, both good and evil, will be brought to light, and brought to account, in the judgment of the great day, (Rom. 2. 16;) there is no good work, no

14 For <sup>e</sup>God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.

hath been heard, is.—<sup>e</sup>Matt. 12. 36.

bad work, hid, but shall then be made manifest.—*Henry*.

#### Authorities to be Consulted.

See the authorities upon Lesson XI, and also Lesson Helps for 1876, 3d Quarter, Lesson XII, (Sept., 1876.) Pulpit Analyst, vol. v, 118. Edmondson's Short Sermons, page 112. Freeman's Bible Manners and Customs, 650, 706, 541, 536. Bishop Bull's Sermons. Foster's Cyclopedia of Illustrations, [numbers marked with a star refer to poetical quotations,] ver. 1: \*993, 4198, 4973, 7029, 7620; 2: 4250; 3: 10525; 4: 9370; 5: \*1823, 3019, 4050, 9570; 6: \*713; 7: \*1594, 3798, 6955; 8: \*103, 112, 9843; 9: 11854; 10: 11837, 12268; 11: 8470; 12: 11832, 10260; 13: 5056, 8208; 14: 3416, 10821.

#### Practical Thoughts.

[REMEMBER GOD.]

1. We should remember God, because he is our Creator, the author of our being. Ver. 1.
2. We should remember God, because of coming old age, when God will be our stay. Vers. 1, 2.
3. We should remember God, because death is at hand, when opportunities will have passed away. Vers. 5, 6.
4. We should remember God, because of the vanity and worthlessness of life without God. Ver. 8.
5. We should remember God, because true wisdom proceeds from God, and is found in God's way. Ver. 9.
6. We should remember God, because he has proclaimed it as the great duty of life. Ver. 13.
7. We should remember God, because of the judgment, when God will bring us into account for our lives. Ver. 14.

#### Sermon Outline.

BY REV. A. N. CRAFT, D.D.

#### I. The Creator.

Our relations to him.

#### II. The Creator should be remembered.

1. Our proneness to forget him.
2. The necessity of remembering him.
  - (a) Godless reason goes astray.
  - (b) Godless desires lead to ruin.
  - (c) A godless life a source of evil to the world.

- (d) Consider reason when its operations are guided by proper thoughts of God.  
 (e) Then the desires are satisfied with holiness and all discipline which leads to its attainment.  
 (f) A godly life a benediction to the world.

### III. The Creator should be remembered by the young.

#### 1. Consider the hinderances to the commencement

of religious thought in middle life and old age. Present the picture contained in Eccl. 7. 7-11.

#### 2. Contrast with the advantages possessed by the young.

- (a) Character plastic.  
 (b) Days untroubled.  
 (c) Bodily and mental powers not enfeebled.

#### IV. The ingratitude and injustice involved in youthful impiety.

## SERMON OUTLINES.

[These Sermon Outlines were received after the lessons to which they belong had been stereotyped, and it was impossible to insert them in full except in this manner at the end of the book.]

*Continued from page 30.*

of sin consists in the deceitfulness, its power to hoodwink men, disguise itself, and make the worse appear the better part.

a. Sin deceives men by *misrepresenting the character of God*. In the first temptation the serpent pictured the Creator as tyrannical, jealous, unjust; in like manner Satan proceeded in the wilderness assaults which he made upon the saviour, endeavoring to inculcate suspicion in reference to the wisdom and mercy of the Father's dealings toward his Son, and thus ever has sin tried to malign and misrepresent the Almighty. In this passage St. James tells us that men delude themselves by the notion that God tempts men, impels them toward wrong, leads them from safety into danger and evil. God is the giver of good, not the author of sin.

b. Sin *disguises its own character*. It cloaks itself in false appearances, calls good evil, and evil good, seems to be fair, allowable, harmless, delightful, while at the same time it is really ready to poison, benumb, and destroy all the powers of the soul. It promises, "I will give you riches, pleasure, honor, triumph," but at the end, and indeed throughout its course, it pays the wages of disease, shame, fear, remorse, and death. Decking itself in gay, alluring colors, it entices the eye and rouses the appetite with specious and plausible visions of enjoyment and victory. What the apostle here calls the "filthiness and overflowing of wickedness" seems to the sinner quite otherwise; something attractive and inviting, arrayed as it is in glamour and gayety.

If men would but recognize the ghastliness, indecency, enormity of their sins, calling them by right names, and discerning their sure outcome! Ah! if they would; but they do not, and so they are blinded and led captive by the devil at his will.

c. Sin deceives a man as to *his real condition*. Under its wily and lulling spell the soul plumes itself with vain notions of imaginary virtues, is puffed up with conceit, and says, "I am rich, and I increased with goods, and have need of nothing," while it is indeed poor and miserable and blind and naked and perishing. An illustration of this principle given in the lesson is that of a man with an unbridled tongue—an uncontrolled temper, hasty, passionate—who yet imagines himself to be religious, and thus deceives his own heart. In like manner the mere hearer of the word deludes himself with the notion that the formalities of religion are sufficient, and is contented with superficial and occasional religious impressions.

In view of the deceitfulness of sin:

I. *Hear the word*. It reveals the truth as to God, the nature of sin, the heart of man. It shows us the dangers to be avoided, the snares to be shunned.

II. *Reflect upon the word*, looking into this perfect law of liberty, continuing therein. By reflection alone can the truth be digested, assimilated, made a part of our very being.

III. *Obeys the word*. He that does the will of God, or wishes to do it, shall know. Knowledge, growth, insight, power, come from obedience.

IV. *Exemplify* the character of mercy, kindness, purity, which is set forth in the word as our pattern. As the Father of lights is continually lavish of good and perfect gifts on men, even so let his children imitate his example; ministering to the fatherless and the widow, caring for the poor, and in all deeds of charity and compassion making incarnate once more upon earth the Lover of men who went about doing good.

*Continued from page 42.*

self-respect or self-reliance. They who possess these will be ambitious, and without them none can rise in the world of history, of letters, of morals.

2. *This is attested by history*. Cinchatus in returning to his plow, and Washington by resigning his position, gained a stronger hold upon the

## SERMON OUTLINES.

affections of the people than had they continued in their respective offices. What is true of the State is equally true in the Church. He who seeks humbly to do his duty is soon placed in more responsible positions. We rise on performances, not professions.

3. *Exaltation is promised by our Saviour as the reward of humility.* In fact, it is the result of humility, for thereby we throw off the selfishness that is despicable, and are clothed with the nobility that is admirable.

**III. Humility is requisite to eternal salvation.** All life is a conflict between pride and humility. The world presents to sense that which lifts up self. "All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me." God seeks the surrender of self, that the nobler aspirations may be gratified.

1. *Forgiveness cannot be obtained without humility.* "To this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit." It does require an effort to say, "I am wrong;" yet confession is essential to pardon.

2. *Purity cannot be obtained without humility.* So long as the pride that opposes God dwells in the heart there can be no purity. Only the clear, calm depths of the heart can reflect the image of the Holy One. Purity is more than morality, more than virtue. It is the one only stream that flows from entire devotion to God, and its branches permeate every nook of life.

3. *Heaven cannot be obtained without humility.* Even here, the more we think of heaven, its character, its inhabitants, its enjoyments, the more we lose sight of self. What, then, must be the holy spirit of him who dwells with God? And the four and twenty elders which sat before God, on their seats, fell upon their faces and worshiped God.

**Apply.** The disciples inquired of our Saviour, "Who is greatest in the kingdom of heaven? And Jesus called a little child, and set him in the midst of them." And in that type of a guiltless, loving, humble character they could see who is greatest. It is our work to bring mankind back to the virtue and humility of childhood.

Continued from page 70.

heart. It has no sympathy with truth. The natural heart is enmity against God and truth, and this because God is the source of all truth. If this natural perversity be yielded to, the man will drift farther and farther away from the truth.

b. Confirmed habits of sin will certainly prevent the search for truth. Such habits imply the love of sin. When sin is loved truth is ever an unwelcome guest. Men love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil. Lovers of sin do not wish reproof, and so they will not come to the light, and they know that light is truth.

c. Carelessness concerning all moral and religious questions will prevent the search for truth. The soul must be aroused to a sense of need before it will seek any good. "Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light," is the call of God to dead or drowsy souls, which must startle them into consciousness of danger and destitution before they become successful seekers after truth.

d. Malignant opposition to the truth prevents all search for truth. Few sink to this level. It is the condition of lost spirits. There are some living men who seem to have reached it. It may come to be the condition of the careless and of the habitually sinful. When men hate knowledge, and do not choose the fear of the Lord, reject his counsel and despise his reproof, they are in the greatest peril of becoming malignant opposers of the truth; and so the light that is in them may become darkness ever increasing, hopeless, eternal.

Four characteristics distinguish real seekers after truth:

a. They are honestly ignorant. Time, place, and various circumstances may have prevented the increase of knowledge, the search after and apprehension of truth. The honestly ignorant are those who have used faithfully and well the opportunities which have been afforded them.

b. Real seekers after the truth are always willing to receive new light. They stand with their faces toward the dawn if a single streak of gray glimmers in the distant horizon. They have no cherished whims or pet ideas that they are determined to retain, even when convinced that they are contrary to the truth. Above all things else they want to know and do the truth.

c. Real seekers after truth are always painstaking investigators. Time, patient effort, self-sacrificing devotion, are freely given to secure the desired end.

d. Real seekers after truth reverently recognize the Holy Scriptures as the revealed will of God, and so the source of all truth. They may traverse every field of knowledge and research, but they never fail to ponder with prayerful attention the sacred truths of the Bible. "Thy word is truth," is the sentiment of their souls. They are mindful of the promise, "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all liberally, and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him." And so God and his word supplies all needed moral and spiritual truth.

These qualities possessed by the Bereans called forth the commendation of the writer of the Acts of the Apostles; they are always elements of a noble, broad, and generous character. It is our privilege and duty to possess them. Then shall we come to know the truth, and the truth shall make us free.

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